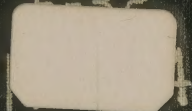
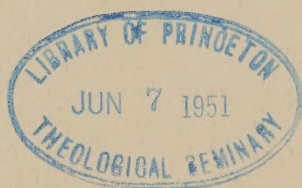


Paul Lambourne Higgins

PREACHERS
OF
POWER

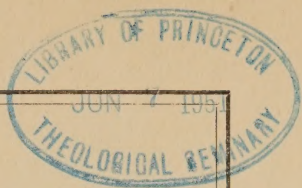
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PREACHERS OF POWER

HENRY WARD BEECHER
PHILLIPS BROOKS
WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH

by

PAUL LAMBOURNE HIGGINS

Vantage Press, Inc. New York 4

to my mother

MINNIE HAUKE HIGGINS

and to the memory of my father

CLARENCE FRANK HIGGINS

this book is affectionately dedicated

P R E F A C E

IN THESE BIOGRAPHICAL sketches I have sought to portray three of the truly great men of modern times. Each, in his particular way, was a preacher of power. Each had a singular influence on subsequent generations.

For forty years Henry Ward Beecher was America's most eloquent orator, the church's most famous and controversial figure, and one of the nation's greatest political powers. He brought a new freedom to the Christian pulpit and a humanizing influence to the life and thought of America.

Phillips Brooks, living in the same period, was one of the best loved men of his century. A magnificent orator, a brilliant prophet, a spiritual giant, he remarkably exemplified the Christian life at its very best.

A generation later there came Walter Rauschenbusch, who brought fresh vigor to the teachings of Jesus, applying them to social and economic problems. He gave the social gospel its theological formulation and became the champion of a more just and brotherly world.

My appreciation is expressed to Dr. Herbert Francis Evans, Professor Emeritus of Religion in Whittier College, for reading the manuscript and for giving wise counsel. I am especially indebted to my secretary, Mrs. Robert J. Weir, for typing the manuscript and for making many valuable suggestions.

PAUL LAMBOURNE HIGGINS

Chicago

January 24, 1950.

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HENRY WARD BEECHER



HENRY WARD BEECHER

Henry Ward Beecher

ONE SABBATH MORNING in the Plymouth Church of Brooklyn, the pews overflowing with worshipers, Henry Ward Beecher read from the New Testament these words: "Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath day to do good, or to do evil, to save life, or destroy it?" Then stepping over to the side of the chancel, Beecher called, "Come up here, Sarah, and let us all see you." A girl of exceptional beauty stood from a front pew, and with hesitation and obvious embarrassment walked to a chair on the platform. Her features were attractive, and her skin was of a lovely light complexion. Her father was of white blood, her mother Negro, and the girl a slave.

"And this is a marketable commodity," Beecher said, his great eyes filling with tears. "Such as she are put into one balance and silver into the other. I reverence woman. For the sake of the love I bore my mother I hold her sacred even in the lowest position and will use every means in my power for her uplifting. What will you do now? May she read her liberty in your eyes? Shall she go out free?" Soon the offering plates were filled with money and jewelry, and the slave-girl was free.

This dramatic scene was repeated in various ways many times between 1848 and 1861, as Beecher sought to publicly display the evils of slavery, and, wherever possible, to give freedom to individual slaves. During those years, many slaves found themselves free for the first time as they stood on the chancel platform of Henry

Ward Beecher's church. These acts, in their influence on the individuals involved, symbolized a nation-wide influence, and at times, a world-wide influence, of the heroic pastor of the Plymouth Church.

The part Beecher played in the life of the nation, and in the development of Christian thought and action during the Nineteenth Century, cannot be overestimated. A distinguished secretary of state, John Hay, called him "the greatest preacher since St. Paul preached on Mars Hill." For forty years, during the most critical and tumultuous period in American history, his voice had a vital effect in the life of the institutions and people of the nation. No other figure was more devotedly admired and more bitterly hated. Although he never held a public office, there was no public voice, not even that of the president, more significantly heard over a long period of years. As a preacher, he was more responsible than any other man for liberalizing the pulpit, and for bringing to public light the social aspects of the Gospel. Firmly rooted in a Christ-centered message, his preaching was not limited by any narrowly defined dogma. A great, warm-hearted man, with human frailties and short-comings, he was sufficiently great in spiritual stature to withstand as scurrilous a slander as has ever been made against a clergyman. His reputation suffered at times, especially during his later years, but the true character of the man remains unmarred, his greatness towering like that of an heroic and benevolent giant above the pygmies of malice.

Born in Litchfield, Connecticut, June 24, 1813, Henry Ward Beecher was the eighth child of Lyman Beecher and his wife, Roxana Foote Beecher. Litchfield, a beautiful old town located among the Berkshire Hills, was for sixteen years the home of the Beechers. It was here that Lyman Beecher preached in the Congregational Church during the years of his prime as a revivalist. It was here that he so eloquently expounded Calvinism and opposed the heresies of Unitarianism. His voice was heard, too, against some of the prevailing social evils, such as dueling and intemperance. It was in Litchfield that Henry Ward spent his early boyhood and received the customary grammar school education. For a while he went to the Widow Kilbourne's School, a dismal place operated by a long, lean old woman who used hickory switches to lend enforcement to drab memorizing. From here he went to the district school, and this, too, was a dreaded place for the sparkling young son of the Congregational minister. Strait-ruled discipline of the old district school type did not in the least appeal to Henry Ward. In later years he wrote: "Can there be

anything worse for a lively mercurial, mirthful, active little boy, than going to a winter district school? Yes. Going to a summer district school!" And he describes the latter as "the Miltonic depth below the deepest depth."

Henry Ward's mother died while he was yet a lad in Litchfield, and Lyman Beecher married a second time. The step-mother was a beautiful woman but inclined to be unduly strict in requiring the children to memorize the catechism. All through his life Beecher disliked routine memorization. The family left Litchfield in 1826, moving to Boston, where Henry attended the Latin School. After a brief period at Mount Pleasant, a preparatory school, he entered Amherst College in 1830 at the age of seventeen. This religiously conservative college had been organized only nine years earlier. Henry's academic record at Amherst was quite respectable but by no means eminent. He read widely, but too often in fields of his own choosing rather than in the professorially designated areas. While Henry was at college, his father moved from Boston to the bustling young metropolis of the west, Cincinnati, to become the president of the Lane Theological Seminary.

When Henry Ward decided to enter the ministry as his life work, it was quite natural that he should go to Lane to finish his preparation. It was while at the seminary that he had a religious experience about which he afterwards spoke a great deal. In describing this experience of Christ as God's supreme manifestation, he writes: "I know not what the tablets of eternity have written down, but I think that when I stand in Zion and before God, the brightest thing I shall look back upon will be that blessed morning of May when it pleased God to reveal to my wandering soul the idea that it was His nature to love a man in his sins for the sake of helping him out of them; that He was not furious with wrath toward the sinner, but pitied him. . . ." After this experience Beecher was confident of his mission in life and never hesitated in his whole-hearted effort to fulfill it.

While at Amherst College, Henry had met a classmate's sister, Eunice Bullard of West Sutton, Massachusetts, and after tutoring the young lady in Latin, the friendship deepened and an engagement was announced. There were other women who had attracted Henry's attention, and later while he was in Ohio there was at least one belle who was enamored of the young theologian. As he finished his studies at Lane, Beecher became increasingly anxious to marry. He made a hurried trip to the Atlantic coast, and on August 3, 1837,

was united in marriage to Eunice Bullard. The young couple traveled to Cincinnati, reaching that city the end of August. Beecher was then ordained a minister in the Presbyterian Church, and at once accepted a call to a pastorate in the little frontier village of Lawrenceburg, Indiana, situated on the banks of the Ohio River. Serving as minister, sexton, and general handyman for the small Presbyterian Church, Beecher had twenty persons in his membership, all women except one who was identified as a male. One large robust woman, who held all of the important offices of the church, and who kept a kindly eye on the young pastor, was his only supporter after he preached his first sermon. Her confidence in him was a steadying source of strength to Henry Ward. Although his two years at Lawrenceburg were marked by self-denial and poverty, the bride and bridegroom living in two rooms over a stable, the passing months brought the rallying support of the congregation and witnessed the spiritual growth of the church.

The young minister from New England, who might well have responded to a call to a church in the genteel East, had started his preaching career in the rather remote wilds of western Indiana. While in the West, he acquired certain characteristics that remained with him throughout his life. His subsequent thought and action showed an appreciation of the frontier and an understanding of the simple virtues of the plain people. There remained in his manner and dress, and even in his unrivaled oratory of later years, a certain earthy quality which recalls the life of the frontier.

Indianapolis was a village growing up in a great wilderness when Beecher moved there to preach in 1839. Here he received a salary of six hundred dollars a year, which was twice that of Lawrenceburg. He entered into his work with his characteristic enthusiasm and was soon a vital factor in the life of the town. It was not long until he was the most prominent minister in the community, and leading public figures and members of the legislature began attending his church to hear what the young preacher was saying. As editor, reformer, and citizen, as well as minister, he influenced the life of Indianapolis. His pulpit effectiveness and oratory were responsible for driving the professional gamblers out of the town. As could be expected, he made bitter enemies, but at the same time he was loved and admired by many both in and out of his congregation. He never failed to respond to a summons for personal counseling and assistance, although he did very little regular pastoral calling. It was dur-

ing these years that Beecher began to apply those principles of preaching which helped to make him one of the greatest princes of the pulpit. As he later recalled, he began to recognize the principle that distinguishes a sermon from an essay or literary address. A true sermon has a definite object in the preacher's mind. It is not an end, but a means to an end—the end being to win souls for Jesus Christ.

The prominence of Beecher grew. When President William H. Harrison died, Beecher and the Governor of Indiana delivered the principal addresses at the funeral. While in Indianapolis he preached a series of sermons against slavery, for already he had felt the imperative need to correct what he considered a national immorality.

In the Spring of 1847 Beecher went to New York to address a meeting of the American Home Missionary Society, and while there he was offered the associate pastorate of the influential Park Street Church in Boston, but he did not accept this call. At the same time he was being approached by a group of men who wanted him to become the pastor of a newly-organized Congregational Church in Brooklyn. The men were persistent, bringing considerable pressure to bear, and when Beecher left for Indianapolis they followed him with letters. Beecher had expected to remain in the West, but the challenging call of Brooklyn, together with the illness of his wife whose health required a climatic change, led him to accept the call. Little could he dream that in Brooklyn he was to begin a forty-year pastorate destined to become the most distinguished and influential in the history of America.

There were only twenty-one persons in this newly-formed Congregational Church, but the possibilities for growth were great, and Beecher welcomed the opportunity of taking hold of a new church and building it up in keeping with his own ideas and standards. His salary was to be fifteen hundred dollars, a considerable increase over his Indianapolis support; as he left for Brooklyn he had to borrow money in order to pay the necessary family expenses.

Henry Ward Beecher arrived in Brooklyn in the early fall of 1847 to become the pastor of the Plymouth Church. Brooklyn was a flourishing city of sixty thousand persons, with a number of fine churches and several distinguished ministers. James K. Polk was then the President of the United States. The infamous Mexican War was being waged, and the slavery issue was casting its dark shadow across the country. Old Daniel Webster was still the foremost orator of the Republic and the chief defender of the Constitution. Henry

Clay and John C. Calhoun were venerable members of the Senate, and Abraham Lincoln was serving a term in the House of Representatives. That country west of the Mississippi River was a vast wilderness, and gold had not yet been discovered in California. Brigham Young was leading the first Mormon wagon train into Utah. Longfellow's *Evangeline* was published that year, and Jenny Lind was singing in England, not yet having come to America. Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt and E. L. Davenport were the reigning favorites of the American stage. Horace Greeley was publishing the *New York Tribune*, and Charles Sumner was organizing the American Peace Society in Boston.

On October 10, 1847, Beecher preached his first sermon in Plymouth Church, and an era in American life began. In his morning sermon, he preached on Jesus Christ as the source of true religion, a note which was always at the heart of his preaching. In his evening sermon that first Sunday, he boldly declared that he intended to apply the principles of Christ to all great social issues, and that he would unhesitatingly deal with slavery, intemperance, and other national evils. This statement was a shocking and almost revolutionary one for that period, and it was obvious to all who heard Beecher that he meant what he said and would not be moved from his high prophetic purpose. At no time during the subsequent years did Beecher ever retreat from this position, nor did he ever compromise out of fear in preaching what he understood to be the application of the Gospel to social problems. There were few clergymen in the years prior to the Civil War who would frankly consider from the pulpit many of the issues which Beecher faced, and no preacher of that time actually dealt with such social problems in the completely forthright manner as did he. It is not to be understood, however, that the social emphasis dominated his preaching, or that it even occupied a major part of his sermon topics, for it did not; by far the larger part of his preaching dealt with the personal element in religion. Above all things, he was an evangelical preacher.

The young man who mounted that Brooklyn pulpit in the fall of 1847 was only thirty-four years old. In person he was of medium height, being rather heavy and of powerful stature. His eyes were expressive, his nose prominent and well-formed, his lips full and smoothly curved. His heavy hair hung low, as was the custom of the day, flowing comfortably around his ears and over the back of his collar. His countenance reflected a personal gentleness and a warm

human-heartedness. There was nothing in Beecher of that coldly stern appearance sometimes prevalent among Nineteenth Century clergymen. His was the expression of tolerance and generosity revealing a spirit both big and noble in compass and warm-blooded and affectionate in quality. His face was highly flexible, and it expressed, in harmony with his voice and arms and whole body, the message of his heart, whether he was preaching from the pulpit or conversing in the parlor.

Beecher's first few months in Brooklyn did not bring very large congregations to the church. His preaching on such unpopular subjects as slavery and intemperance offended many people, and some of his conservative parishioners tried in vain to dissuade him from discussing what they considered dangerous and controversial issues. But the unpopularity of a subject did not in the least disturb Beecher so long as he believed himself to be right. With great conviction he felt that it was his imperative duty to give utterance to God's demand in regard to the great social issues. He had no use or respect for that kind of religion which says business is business, and politics is politics, and religion is religion. Christ is concerned with all areas of human life. "Religion," said Beecher, "is using everything for God; but many men dedicate business to the Devil and politics to the Devil and shove religion into the cracks and crevices of time and make it the hypocritical outcrawling of their leisure and their laziness." This was a disturbing Gospel to hear, especially for those who like to slumber to the tune of soft, syrup-soaked sermons.

In less than a year the congregation began to increase rapidly. In 1849 the old church edifice burned down, and construction was begun immediately on the present building. Large, comfortable, and attractive, the new church, however, did not have the customary architectural appointments. It lacked certain qualities conducive to liturgy, and yet it had a worshipful and dignified atmosphere. Accommodating twenty-five hundred people, the church throughout Beecher's pastorate was crowded to overflowing. The popular saying for over a third of a century was, "If you want to hear Mr. Beecher preach, take the ferry to Brooklyn and then follow the crowd." Often there would be a double line for two or three blocks waiting for entrance into the church. In later years the crowds were so large that a special panel opening in back of the pulpit had to be provided for Beecher's entrance, as there would be so many people sitting

in the aisles and on the chancel steps that the normal passages to the pulpit were impassable.

Plymouth Church became not only the mecca of the greatest preaching in America, but the focal point for the consideration of the most burning issues of the day by the country's most brilliant lecturers. Beecher preached both morning and evening on Sunday, and he lectured on Friday evening. This Friday night meeting, centering around the pastor's lecture and also including a prayer service and social gathering, became one of the most popular features of the church and a source of influence in both the community and the nation. From time to time guest lecturers of wide fame were invited to speak at the Friday evening meetings. Beecher himself liked these sessions. He would generally arrive a few minutes early and sit in his comfortable chair on the platform, where parishioners and visitors could come to meet him. On winter evenings he would be wearing his heavy fur-collared ulster, keeping it around his shoulders until the time of the lecture. At the appointed hour, he would step to the reading desk and announce a hymn. After the lecture he would remain awhile in his chair to greet the people and would sometimes go to one side of the platform to counsel with some anxious individual concerning a personal problem. Warm, deeply cordial, and sympathetic in spirit, he was a wise and understanding minister.

Beecher made very few pastoral calls. Perhaps the house-to-house routine was not appealing to him, and apparently he did not consider it a very vital part of his ministry. He once recommended pastoral visitation as a good thing for a minister to practice, but as with most clergymen, when faced with temporal limitations, he had to weigh the value of the various demands upon his time. He must have felt that more time and energy are spent in pastoral calling than the results justify.

Beecher was an early riser. The morning was usually spent in his study. His activities were never permitted to crowd out the period for industrious study. He read widely and wisely, took essential notes from what he read, and in his study of the Gospels he classified the subjects and incidents with meticulous and systematic care. A little past noon Beecher would leave the study for a walk, returning home to dine at two o'clock. Following dinner he would rest for an hour or longer. He used to say that it is better to rest prior to one's work as a preparation for it than afterwards as a recuperation from it. Later in the afternoon he might make a social

call or two, generally to the homes of intimate friends and parishioners where he could relax. Following supper he was ready for the public engagements. The constant strain of evening lectures, sermons, and public appearances such as Beecher was accustomed to making is extremely taxing on an individual's strength. Carefully and wisely was his afternoon schedule arranged so that he could be at his best when the important evening engagement arrived. On Saturday afternoons Mr. Beecher usually went on quiet strolls, and would spend the evenings alone; thus he was fully ready to preach his Sunday morning sermons.

Beecher did not belong to any clubs. His friends were in many walks of life; he knew bankers and newsboys, merchants and dock workers, professional men and fishermen.

Beecher's heart was in his preaching and lecturing, and both his study and his activities were geared to these prime interests. His great influence in the world was as an orator, and he would not let anything interfere with the goal of his oratory. Whether in the pulpit or the lecture hall or the public assembly, Beecher was always prepared to speak on the great issues. His chief goal was to proclaim God's truth. He knew that he could do this best through his oratory, and he was determined to let nothing hinder him in carrying out this purpose. Years after his death there was erected in the foyer of the Plymouth Church a plaque in honor of Beecher, on which appears this inscription: "I have not concealed Thy loving kindness and Thy truth from the great congregation." For forty years Mr. Beecher's congregation consisted not only of the members of Plymouth Church, but in a real sense the whole nation, and in some respects the world. Henry Ward Beecher preached the love and truth of God with a singleness of devotion seldom equalled and never surpassed.

During the eighteen-fifties Henry Ward Beecher's name became familiar to every family throughout the country. His influence in his own community was great from his early months there, and it was not long until his fame reached that of national proportions. Grain dealers from Chicago, merchants from Boston, and statesmen from Washington would go to Brooklyn to hear the pastor of the Plymouth Church. New York business men listened carefully to what the young preacher was saying, and political leaders kept their ears open for every word that he might speak concerning local and national affairs. The nation's literary giants, Emerson and Thoreau,

came down from Concord to listen to him. The newspapers gave much space to his sermons and lectures and public utterances. So familiar was his name and the name of his church that The New York *Times* when mentioning a sermon or lecture in Plymouth Church of Brooklyn found it sufficient to simply refer to "Mr. Beecher's church."

During the fearful eighteen-fifties, the slavery question became an increasingly heated and more and more serious issue. Slavery was being gradually and peaceably abolished in the early years of the century, but the adoption of the cotton gin in 1812 changed this tendency. The South fell into a type of feudalism as bleak as anything that had existed since the Middle Ages. Slavery was considered indispensable to the cotton growers. Whereas the northern states had a diversity of industries, the South depended essentially upon one industry, cotton, and that industry depended upon slavery. The Missouri Compromise, which had prohibited the further extension of slavery, was repealed in 1854, and thereafter new territories could determine by popular vote whether they would have slavery or not. This doctrine created a terrible plight in Kansas, where the legitimate settlers were predominantly against slavery, but into which state the pro-slavery interests sent armed men across the Missouri border. These men, known as "border ruffians," seized control of the state government and by force of arms made the state pro-slavery. Northern anti-slavery leaders sought to furnish supplies to the legitimate settlers.

Into this desperate situation stepped Henry Ward Beecher. The Plymouth Church sent the settlers a large consignment of rifles, shipping them into Kansas marked "Bibles," so as to avoid the suspicions of the pro-slavery regime. These came to be known as "Beecher's Bibles." This action by Beecher was undoubtedly prompted by his love of freedom and his abhorrence of slavery, but the propriety and good judgment of it certainly can be questioned. It was an unfortunate incident in his career and was hardly consistent with his public utterances. Beecher must have soon realized his mistake, and seeing the dangerous possibility of a civil war, he changed his course of action. He was never an abolitionist, such as Garrison who wanted the immediate freedom of the slaves. Beecher saw that there was guilt on the hands of both the North and the South. He wanted to see slavery abolished gradually and by peaceable means.

Beecher may be described as an anti-slavery reformer who wanted

to work within the framework of the Constitution by legitimate and legally constituted methods. He opposed violence and war. He sought to keep the Christian ideal central, and, therefore, treated the slave and slave-owner alike as brother men. He opposed the extension of slavery into new territory and thought it was wrong to repeal the Missouri Compromise. Through moral and religious persuasion he felt that slavery's gradual abolition could be accomplished in those states where it already existed.

While his sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe, was helping to focus the nation's attention on the evil of slavery through her popular book *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Beecher himself was no less spectacular in his series of public sales from the Plymouth pulpit. Many a Negro moved from bondage into a life of freedom during those dramatic moments when Beecher would auction a slave girl from his chancel platform. But Beecher's more widespread and lasting influence against slavery was accomplished through his oratory. His sermons and lectures on the subject were both intellectually sound and emotionally appealing. He was not an agitator or fanatic. He was a thorough-going evangelical clergyman, and was an anti-slavery reformer *because* he was a preacher. When Beecher preached, he preached the Gospel, and proclaimed it without fear or compromise. He was not preoccupied with one subject. His broad mind and large heart sought to do justice to many aspects of the Christian message. Although he preached anti-slavery sermons from time to time, he never let the subject get out of proportion, and his chief message was always directed to personal needs. By far the larger number of his sermons aimed at the conviction and conversion of men, which is exactly what he understood the preacher's mission to be, that of winning souls to Christ. At the same time he did not leave unsaid some of the more unpopular aspects of the Gospel. When he preached against slavery, it was not with the one-sidedness of an agitator, but with the authority of a prophet of God, who could prefix his declaration with "thus saith the Lord." His well-balanced judgment, coupled with his prophetic courage, enhanced his position as a preacher and gave him a place of unusual influence in the church and the nation. He wielded more weight than almost any other anti-slavery reformer because his utterances were within the solid context of the Christian Gospel.

Beecher never lost sight of his prime mission in life: to preach Christ as the power of God unto salvation, but he believed that Christ

must be sovereign in all areas and relationships of human life. So he did not hesitate to go to the very center of the political arena, for politics are as much a part of human living as are its other aspects. Feeling that slavery should not be extended and that constitutional means should be taken toward the abatement of the menace, he concluded that the pro-slavery Democratic Party should not continue in office. In 1856 he announced his support of John C. Fremont, the first Republican candidate for President, and made an active campaign in his behalf, delivering speeches before thousands of people.

Two years later, in the very middle of the increasingly terrifying slavery issue, Beecher began a religious revival series in Plymouth Church. Again he had kept his balance and realized the need for an inner spiritual renewal. The revival was a heartening one; the congregations were huge and the church was overflowing with life and enthusiasm.

More and more people from all over the states, and from abroad, too, made hearing Mr. Beecher's sermons an essential point when in New York. There was always unusual interest shown in the renting of the pews, with a constant clamoring for the best locations. The *New York Times* on January 4, 1860, notes: "Much excitement was created while the sale was progressing, at the discovery that many of the successful bidders were merchants from the Western States, who purchased seats that they might have the privilege of attending Mr. Beecher's ministrations when brought East on business."

As the clouds of war were gathering, Beecher used his influence for peace, and almost to the last he held to the hope that reconciliation could be effected between the North and the South. He wanted all disputes to be handled peaceably and constitutionally, and he felt, too, that the slavery evil could be eliminated in the same way. When John Brown led his raid at Harper's Ferry in a bold strike against slavery, reformers throughout the North lauded him, but Beecher realized the foreboding danger. In a sermon on October 30, 1859, he strongly denounced war and bloodshed and insisted that peaceable means be adhered to in all disputes. He said that he appreciated the purpose and the courage of John Brown, but that he could not condone his method.

In the campaign of 1860, Beecher supported Abraham Lincoln for President. The Illinois Republican held views on the slavery issue similar to those of the Brooklyn preacher. For the most part,

the two men were in agreement on national issues. When the Civil War came, Beecher whole-heartedly supported Lincoln, and on various public occasions he delivered notable orations concerning the need of eliminating slavery and of reuniting the country in peace. The war was a terrible tragedy for Beecher, and it cut him to the heart. He was anxious for its termination and keen to see a reconciliation. It has been said that Beecher was critical of Lincoln, and that he was even receptive to the offers of political leaders to replace Lincoln as the Republican presidential candidate in 1864. These accounts are only rumors, and doubtless without foundation. Beecher was anxious that the war end and was greatly distressed by its prolongation; but there is nothing in the record to indicate that he ever wanted Lincoln replaced, and certainly not by himself. There is every reason to believe that he had confidence in Lincoln, although he did not trust some of the President's advisors.

During the darkest days of the war, there came to Mr. Beecher's home, late one night, a tired and lonely visitor, and for several hours the two men were alone in an upstairs room. Not until some time later did Mr. Beecher disclose, even to his wife, that the weary guest that melancholy night was the President of the United States. When Lincoln visited New York he usually went to hear Beecher preach, and his pew is still marked in old Plymouth Church.

Much has been written about Beecher's famous trip to England in the early Fall of 1863. It seems clear now that he went wholly on his own responsibility, and did not in any way represent the government. The trip no doubt was with Lincoln's approval, but Beecher's mission was as a private citizen and not as a secret emissary. The financing of the trip was entirely from his own funds and from those of his church. The purpose of the trip was to help keep England out of the war, for at that time the British had considerable interest in a Southern victory. The English press and audiences were extremely rude toward him. No other American has ever been subjected to such infamous slanders while abroad as was Beecher when he arrived in England. Huge placards denouncing him as a sinister figure were displayed wherever he appeared, and the newspapers filled column after column with maliciously false statements about the American clergyman. When he would go to address a meeting, the people would hiss and throw missiles at him, and sometimes it would be over a half-hour before he could say a word; but Beecher stayed and gradually the noise from the audience would subside. When Beecher was

half through his address the audience would be fairly respectable, and by the time he finished he would have the people so fully on his side that they would stand and cheer. Few orators of history have so completely won hostile audiences as did Beecher. Lyman Abbott commented: "If by oratory we mean power to produce a real and enduring effect on a great audience, and if the greatest test of oratory is conquering a hostile audience and producing a permanent effect upon the hearers in spite of their hostility, then Mr. Beecher's five orations in England take deserved place among the great forensic triumphs of the world."

Beecher's visit to England had a significant effect in molding the opinion of the ordinary Englishman toward the American conflict, and at least an indirect influence on the attitude of the Queen's government. England's favoritism for the South became less apparent in her actions, and her government maintained a "hands off" policy. No doubt other factors were helpful in restraining English intervention, especially the solemn warning from Russia, but Beecher's pilgrimage had an influence which if not decisive, was at least considerable.

Anxious for the termination of hostilities between the states, Beecher advocated the doctrine of reconciliation between all of the warring factions. The war issue was discussed from time to time in his sermons, and frequently in his lectures during this period, but never to the neglect of the preaching of the personal Gospel. His statements concerning the political order arose out of his religious convictions, and his magnanimous attitude relating to the issues of the war sprang from his love for Christ. There were never any elements of bitterness and hatred in Beecher. His faults may have been many, but a lack of love and compassion was not among them.

Upon the conclusion of the Civil War, Beecher presented his views on reconstruction in a remarkable oration at Fort Sumter on April 14, 1865. Here he proclaimed the supremacy of brotherly love, opposing all forms of revenge and retaliation toward the South. He warned the victorious North that to exult over a fallen foe is to violate the Christian commandment. The old enmities must be forgotten and a spirit of forgiveness and brotherly love must reign. A few months later, in a sermon on "The Conditions of A Restored Union," preached from the Plymouth pulpit October 29, 1865, Mr. Beecher gave his views more fully as to what must be done if the nation was again to be united. He insisted that Negroes be protected

from violence and exploitation, and at the same time demanded a policy of trust toward the white people of the South. Exploiters, Northern ruffians, Yankee extremists, and all who advocated a harsh treatment of the South, came under his condemnation. He seldom forgot that there was guilt on the hands of both the North and the South, and he realized that the only way to a restored union was the way of mutual forgiveness and understanding.

Many popular history books and some biographies refer to Beecher's first twenty years in Brooklyn as the more important phase of his life and work. A closer study will reveal the strength and significance of the last half of his career in the Plymouth Church, and would give support to a view that these later years were the more important in their influence on both church and nation. There is more consistent thinking and a more thoroughly defined theological rationale in his years after the Civil War. The quality of his liberalism deepens and seems to flow increasingly from an indwelling love. He remained essentially and always an evangelical preacher, but not within the conventional limitations of the times, for he was constantly giving a new accent to old truths. His great emphasis was on the redemptive love of God in Christ. He insisted that as Christ loves all of us, so, too, must we love one another. Love, Beecher said in his famous Yale Lectures on preaching, "is the going-out of thought, of feelings, and of sympathy towards others, and towards whatever can receive benefit from us. . . . It is the wish that whatever we are thinking of, or saying, or doing, may make someone better and happier."

Beecher's emphasis on love as the heart of the Gospel led him to a pacifist position. He became concerned about the abolition of war as the most serious problem facing mankind. He considered the war-making spirit to be the great obstruction to the progress of civilization. It is the common man, especially among the laboring class, who must rise up and assert himself against militarism. The November 29, 1872 edition of *The New York Times* carries an account of Beecher's address, in which he said that peace must be brought about "by the power of the laborers and husbandmen—the great mass of the working men." Soldiers are forced by their leaders to maim and kill each other in the name of patriotism. The men who make war are the very men who most oppress the people. Beecher's castigation of the war-makers, who are identified as the representatives of vested, predatory interests, is a radical and almost revolu-

tionary statement. The tax burden for the support of the war machine falls chiefly upon the poor people, he said. The European conscription system he vigorously condemned as another method whereby the war spirit is promoted and the masses are brought under the subjugation of the oppressors.

Beecher predicted that the time would come when there will be an organization to preserve the peace of the nations, so that countries can be prevented from going to war "just as we prevent a man from fighting in the street and breaching the peace of our cities." He foresaw an international congress for the settlement of disputes. The whole body of the people, the working men, he said in a lecture January 20, 1873, will insist that in the future they will not be blown against each other. A movement to bring the working men of all nations together in their opposition to warfare and bloodshed is a good movement. Communism, as it existed at that time, sought to do this, said Beecher, and whatever else may be wrong about it, it is at least right in this respect. Passionately concerned about the abolition of militarism and warfare, Beecher did not flinch in declaring himself on this issue at a time when most people seemed oblivious to the growing danger. In his lecture on "Wastes and Burdens of Life," delivered in New York in November 1873, he put war at the top of the list, considering it the major enemy. When Beecher spoke on these critical subjects he was carefully prepared and used solid factual information as a framework which he would illuminate with a majestic and prophetic fire. As one looks back upon the Nineteenth Century, it is Beecher who looms up as the great religious figure: it is his voice that carries the conviction of an authority on high; it is his vision that sees a world brotherhood under a Divine Fatherhood; it is his heart that feels most passionately the saving love of Christ.

It was while at the height of his fame and influence that the name of Henry Ward Beecher was brought into the most unfortunate and unjustifiable scandal of the century. Rumors had been adrift for some months when, in July 1874, the foremost clergyman of America was publicly accused by Theodore Tilton of having engaged in improper conduct with the latter's estranged wife. On the morning of July 22, the newspapers throughout the country carried on their front pages the charges against Beecher. At his summer cottage in Peekskill on the Hudson, Mr. Beecher was apprised of Tilton's accusation, and immediately left for Brooklyn to confer with his friends.

He named a committee of three representatives from the church and three from society to make an investigation. For many months the issue was to take precedence in the public press over all other news of the world. In its leading editorial, when the accusation was first made public, *The New York Times* cautioned the people not to be hasty in their judgments and to withhold comment until the close of the case. Although this unfortunate situation has been given attention in press, histories, and biographies, all out of proportion to its real importance, it is still necessary to present it in order to have a valid portrait of Beecher.

Some years prior to the accusation, Tilton had been an active member in the Plymouth Church and was also engaged with Beecher and others in editing a periodical. The two men disagreed on business matters, and Tilton, becoming very angry, said in the presence of others that he would "strike Mr. Beecher to the heart." Meanwhile Tilton turned his back to religion, and to the sorrow of his wife and friends, began to lecture in support of free love. His home life grew increasingly unhappy. Mrs. Tilton, a religious woman of sensitive taste and a close friend to Mr. Beecher, naturally appealed to her pastor for counsel. A separation was agreed upon. Beecher called regularly on Mrs. Tilton and gave her advice and comfort. Beecher's relationship with Mrs. Tilton was on an admirable plane, but his rather unconventional nature led him into being indiscreet. That he was personally fond of her, and that she held him in high esteem and affection, cannot be doubted. That he lacked a sense of propriety in calling on her so often, when it was not his custom to make pastoral calls, is admitted. That he showed for her great care and warm understanding, he himself never denied. That he ever went beyond such solicitous consideration is not probable. The accusation charging him with adultery cannot be supported by any of the evidence. The charge against Beecher obviously arises out of the animosity of Tilton, a man who had come to hate religion, who had flagrantly betrayed his own wife, and who remained bitter over a business misunderstanding.

While the charges were adrift as rumors, Beecher kept silent; when they were made public, he answered the charges frankly, concisely, and completely. Mrs. Tilton likewise denied the accusation, and publicly denounced her husband for his infidelity and cruelty, referring to him as "an unreliable and unsafe guide, whose idea of

truth-loving is self-loving." She lauded Beecher for his character and integrity.

The trial lasted for months. Perhaps no other trial in American history has occupied as much space in the public press as did the "Beecher Scandal," as it was generally called. The membership of over twenty-five hundred in the Plymouth Church remained, with few exceptions, loyal to the great pastor. Friends sent huge floral pieces to Beecher whenever he was in the courtroom. The flowers so heavily bedecked the Brooklyn bar of justice that editorials appeared in the newspapers under the interesting caption of "Flowers at Court."

Throughout the trial Mr. Beecher preached as usual at the Sunday services and delivered his regular week night lectures. The crowds continued their attendance at Plymouth Church. Long before the appointed hour every available portion of the church edifice would be densely crowded. Throughout the ordeal the minister remained calm and cheerful and carried on his preaching with his usual excellence of quality. He made no mention of the unfortunate subject from the pulpit, but continued, unperturbed, preaching on the great themes of the Christian Faith.

No generation is lacking in its purveyors of smear; and in Beecher's day, there were those who were eager to believe any gossip about a man's moral character, especially if the man maligned be a public figure, and more especially if he be a minister. Some writers today, with an eye on the public's appetite for the exploitation of sex, have gone back to great figures of the past, taking some incident founded on a half truth or a falsehood, and so magnified the event out of proportion as to create an unfavorable opinion of the great person. Beecher, along with other heroic characters including several presidents and a number of famous statesmen and writers, became a subject for these assaults. It is singular that the men who make the attacks are usually of such mental mediocrity that they cannot in any legitimate way attract public notice. Throughout the long trial, Mr. Beecher retained his dignity and composure, never stooping to retaliation nor yielding to malice. He remained a Christian gentleman. One night late in June 1875, Mr. Beecher mentioned his troubles in a Plymouth Church lecture and an insight into both his grief and his faith is caught in his words: "Without the resources of religion I would have been overwhelmed and smothered." He made it clear, too, that he had not a particle of bitterness in his heart toward anyone. Not sure as to how the jury would decide, or how the public

would ultimately react, Beecher maintained his courageous spirit. He had always been God's man, and nothing could deter him in carrying on God's work. There is a defiant note, and one that reaches an heroic height, when he declares, "I don't propose to be put down by anybody on the face of the earth. I don't propose to be put down in any way except as wheat is stamped into the ground and comes up a hundred fold."

When the jury returned in the civil action, there were nine out of the twelve votes favoring Mr. Beecher. This was interpreted by the pastor's friends as his vindication. The leading lawyer for the plaintiff even withdrew from the case and publicly avowed his belief in Beecher's innocence. Eight years after the trial, the judge who had presided over the case, in attending a public meeting honoring Beecher, said of him that "by the integrity of his life and the purity of his character, he has vanquished misrepresentation and abuse." The Plymouth Church committee and the Council of Congregational Churches investigating the matter gave Beecher, by unanimous vote, a complete vindication. Mr. Beecher retained the loyalty of his church, the confidence of his wife, the friendship of Mrs. Tilton, the admiration of the clergy, and the esteem of as large a part of the public as he had previously commanded. The tragedy was in the unjustifiable proportion to which a relatively unimportant incident was magnified.

During the late 1860's and early 1870's, Beecher devoted a considerable amount of time to writing, completing a novel *Norwood*, and the first volume and part of the second of *The Life of Christ*. It was also during this period that he conceived the idea of the Lyman Beecher Lectureship on Preaching at Yale University. Henry N. Sage, a member of Plymouth Church, endowed the lectureship, appropriately named after the pastor's distinguished father. Henry Ward Beecher was invited to deliver the opening series during the winter of 1871-1872, and was subsequently asked to give the lectures for the next two years. This lectureship, so remarkably begun by Beecher, continues to the present time, and is generally regarded as the outstanding contribution to homiletics produced in America.

Beginning in the spring of 1875 and continuing for twelve years, Beecher made an annual lecture tour under the direction of Major J. B. Pond. These tours were highly successful, and Beecher was greeted by huge throngs, even in formerly hostile cities of the South. Traveling three hundred thousand miles, and delivering twelve hun-

dred and sixty-one lectures, he presented subjects of pertinence and interest with an eloquence seldom equalled on the platform. Now in the fullness of his maturity, his heavy-set, slightly stooped figure, with yellowish white hair flowing to his shoulders, was a familiar one in the lecture halls of America. His face was considerably older and lined more distinctly about his mouth and eyes than in former years. His bluish-gray eyes lacked the sparkle of other years, too, but they reflected an even deeper human-heartedness, and the sight of sorrow could still melt them to tears. His lectures revealed a consciousness of social needs, and as had always been his principle, he declared himself frankly on the great issues of the day and gave prophetic utterance to changes he felt should be instituted. Beecher was never an adherent to a *status quo* in society. He was a progressive, and in some respects a radical of radicals.

The sermons at Plymouth Church continued to be the major effort of his life. The love of God was increasingly at the heart of his preaching. He faced every significant issue fearlessly, having complete confidence in the Christ who was always central in his life. When evolution became the subject of great controversy throughout the thinking world, Beecher declared that he did not feel that evolution was inimical to Christianity. He held that the Bible shows the progress of man from lower concepts in the Old Testament to higher concepts in the New Testament, and that the Scriptural account of the creation and development of man has an evolutionary bent. Beecher was the first minister in America to advocate this viewpoint, which today is substantially accepted by the majority of both clergymen and laymen. Beecher's acceptance of certain premises of evolution was on the basis that they fitted into evangelical Christianity, and that they did not subtract from the Faith. He fully believed in the Biblical miracles, and always stressed the Providence of God as being at the heart of religion. He saw God's guiding hand in the unfolding of all life.

The Bible was regarded by Mr. Beecher as the record of man's long relationship with God, in which is shown the gradual and progressive unfolding of knowledge concerning the spiritual life. He did not believe in a literal inerrancy, but rather stressed the living creativity of the Book when read under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the life-creating Book, and gives us our highest conception of God as He reveals Himself in Christ. When the Bible communicates Christ to the individual, it is then the Word of God.

Beecher considered the Doctrine of the Trinity to be basic to the Christian Faith. The nature of Christ is Divine, and this is the great principle that permeates all of his theology. In this respect, which is the essential test after all, Beecher was thoroughly orthodox; but he wanted to be free from those narrow, literalistic, and dogmatic interpretations that had so preoccupied the minds of smaller men.

Hell was not to Mr. Beecher's liking, nor did he believe that a loving God would consign anyone to eternal punishment. During the period when revivalists were vividly painting hell-fire as a certain retribution for the wicked, Beecher preached God's eternal love. He felt that too many misconceptions of God had developed out of a literalistic interpretation of the Scripture, and that no idea could be more blasphemous than to charge God with the authorship of eternal damnation. Beecher's notion of sin was also very different from that of many religionists of his time. He did not bother to list superficial acts as sins, but he pointed rather to the great urges of hate, lust, and greed, and all of their social implications, as the elements that separate people from God. Nor did Beecher fall into the common fallacy of making a blanket denunciation of passion. He knew better than this, for he understood the passions of men and knew that they have a rightful function. In a sermon delivered in 1882, he said: "It is not meant that every time you sow to the appetites or the passions you sin; you do not; for they have their function in life, and they are all right to a limited extent; but when a man gives his whole life to them, when he lives in them, when he gathers the fruit and harvest of his life out of the animal nature, then he sins."

Beecher's preaching was clearly Christocentric. He saw God revealing His love in Christ. He was conscious of man's sinfulness, and of the need for redemption. He believed there would be punishment for disobedience to God, but any literal, everlasting fire was as far from God's nature as darkness from light. "A God of love and justice," he said, "will do what is necessary to be done in order to redeem a soul from death." God's interest is in salvation. Beecher preached Christ because Christ brings men to their God. To bring the whole man into a vital union with God was always the aim of his preaching. In his later years he said to a friend, "When I am gone do not let it be forgotten that my one aim was the winning of the souls of men."

Those who wanted pure spiritual preaching, devoid of superficial

shams, could find it in Beecher. He loved Christ, and he preached Christ. Those who wanted light arising out of the spirit of the New Testament with which to face all areas of human living, and for the improvement of the social order, would find it in Beecher. But those who wanted a narrow interpretation of doctrine and a strict adherence to the social *status quo* would not find it in him.

Beecher preached boldly on the great issues, but unlike many public figures, he did not permit personalities to interfere with the truth of God. He would lash out against a social evil, but would not cast blame on an individual. He was especially generous in his interpretation of other men's opinions, and always believed the best of others. It has been said that Beecher never hated anyone, that he could not even hate those who had most maliciously persecuted him. If any one fact shines out in his life, it is his genuine goodwill and the absence of hate toward all men. Like many men, he advocated tolerance, but, unlike most men, he also practiced it. In a letter appearing in *The New York Times*, June 11, 1883, Mr. Beecher wrote: "I am a Congregationalist, and shall live and die one; but a Christian so bound in his own sphere of faith that his heart is chilled toward his neighbor, is a slave, and needs emancipation."

Beecher was a pioneer in the advocacy of universal suffrage. As in the Reconstruction period he had insisted that the Negro be granted the voting franchise, so, too, in later years, he wanted it extended to include immigrants. Suffrage is not a privilege, or a prerogative, but a natural right, he held, and every individual is by right entitled to it simply because he is a human being. The race, the class, the creed, the nationality, and the sex should not be permitted to remain a barrier. This kind of reasoning was radical, and went to the very core of the meaning of man's inalienable rights. Beecher was speaking far in advance of the thought of his day, and not even yet has America achieved the standard of suffrage he set forth.

When Henry Ward Beecher reached his seventieth birthday, June 24, 1883, an unusual celebration was tendered him at the Academy of Music in Brooklyn. Many distinguished persons were present, and telegrams of tribute were received from famous figures all over the world. The poet John Greenleaf Whittier perhaps best expressed the enduring qualities of the great pastor in the words: "He will be gratefully remembered wherever liberty, patriotism, temperance, freedom of faith, and Christian charity are cherished and honored."

When a letter was read from P. T. Barnum, expressing regret that Mr. Beecher had not been elected President of the United States, the huge crowd cheered, and some persons called out: "He may be yet!"

Mr. Beecher never sought the presidency, nor did he desire any political office, but he maintained a consistent and vigorous interest in the political world. This was a natural interest growing out of his conviction that the Christian Gospel affects every area of human living, including the political order. He never considered himself a member of a political party, always reserving the right to decide upon issues in accordance with the merits of each. Generally he had supported Republican candidates for President, but in 1884 he endorsed Grover Cleveland, who was the Democratic standard-bearer. His opposition to James G. Blaine's high tariff policies, which he believed to be nationalistic and inimical to international cooperation, his dissatisfaction with Republican reconstruction efforts in the South, and his personal feeling of confidence in Cleveland's integrity were the chief factors in leading Mr. Beecher to take his stand in the campaign. His influence was considerable and constituted a major factor in determining the result of the closely contested election.

As ever, Beecher's main drive in life was preaching the Gospel. Until the very last weeks of his life he continued to develop new sermons out of the great themes of the Faith. His earlier contention, never to preach the same sermon twice, was advice he strictly kept. His life was so disciplined that he could devote adequate time to preparation for speaking. He would sometimes consider for weeks and months a sermon theme before presenting it to the congregation. There would be many ideas he would mentally outline, and then would let them grow until they were ripe for preaching. In his earlier years he would often write out his sermons, but in later years he would generally write only an outline and an introduction, leaving the rest to a mind full of rich ideas carefully thought through and well-developed. He never spoke upon a subject unless he had given it much study. Mr. Beecher's sermons were textual in the broad sense; that is, he would select a text, using it as a motto, or an expression of the basic theme, and from there would develop his discourse.

Charles H. Spurgeon once said that Beecher possessed the most remarkable imagination since Shakespeare. This is not an overstatement. His kingly imagination made him a master of human experience. Deeply sympathetic, with a sentiment that usually escaped senti-

mentality, he could, to a remarkable degree, identify himself with the feelings of others, and could then give a vivid oratorical expression to these feelings. He could imagine so intensely and comprehensively that "the pains and pleasures of others" would come home to him as his own.

The Bible and human beings were his great sources of study. His knowledge of, and love for, the King James translation, for poetry, and for the Episcopal liturgy, no doubt enriched the quality of his language. He seldom quoted, for he was one of the few preachers who did not need to quote; his own imaginative genius was more than ample for any occasion, his expressions being graphic and vivid and of a quality distinctly his own.

✓ Beecher held that there are four psychological elements that enter into a successful sermon, imagination, emotion, enthusiasm, and conviction. He himself possessed these qualities to the superlative degree. He was never ashamed of genuine emotion. His preaching contained rich emotional qualities, but at the same time it was always upon a rational basis. He made use of both the intellect and the heart in a homiletical manner seldom equaled. His enthusiasm was at all times evident, for he made a practice of preaching only upon those themes for which he had a natural affection and whole-hearted interest. He preached with great conviction, because he preached only that in which he really believed.

Mr. Beecher was highly dramatic. When he preached, his voice, gesture, facial expression, and body were brought into pictorial action; his face was exceptionally flexible and his eyes extraordinarily expressive. There was enthusiastic vivacity in his voice and intensity in the flow of his words. He would bring an incident to life through a vivid enactment of it. The movement of his eyes and the turn of his body, the expression of his face and the tone of his voice would be rhythmical, like that of a great orchestra, giving majestic utterance to the theme he presented. These magnificently dramatic qualities of the great pulpit orator were, of course, a part of the living man himself; now they can be no longer fully recaptured, but the words of the sermons remain.

There is still great power in Beecher's sermons; both intellectual force and emotional appeal are to be found in reading them today. His illustrations are brief, usually unpretentious, and always effective; his sentences are clear and understandable, enhanced by an attractive phraseology that is characteristically Beecher's. The language is not

ornate, but it is beautiful. The words are the full, easy flowing words that come from a great heart.

Beecher's sermons are not artistic museum pieces; they are vibrant messages, fully alive. Most of his subjects are the timeless ones—Christ, His sufferings, and His love. When he deals with personal problems, such as passions, waste, relaxation, temptation, work, he is dealing with subjects that are always pertinent; they are not dated, but are applicable to today's needs. Beecher understood human nature, and he is at his best when preaching on these issues.

There is a tenderness, a sense of the great pastor's gentleness, in all of his preaching. One never freezes in a cold vacuum when he reads Beecher's sermons. One feels that here is a man who has lived and laughed and suffered, who has known both triumphs and defeats, who has understood the hopes and heartaches of humankind, and who speaks words of help and guidance, not out of pious pretention, but out of a heart that cares and a soul that loves.

Beecher's rhetoric rises at times to majestic heights, but the majesty is not achieved by the rhetoric alone; the oratorical elegance is the outgrowth of the great conviction, the impassioned spirit, and the magnificent content. Beecher's views on preaching are best expressed in his Yale Lectures. It is regrettable that he did not live to write the story of his life. On February 21, 1887, the press reported that Mr. Beecher said he was planning to write an autobiography, but it was too late. He was remarkably active almost to the end, and there was little time to devote to memoirs. He never let up in his preaching and lecturing, and as late as 1886, he made an extensive platform tour of England.

On Sunday evening, February 27, 1887, after preaching what was to be his last sermon, Mr. Beecher, when the crowds dispersed, lingered a while listening to the music of the organ. Two little boys from the streets of Brooklyn had wandered into the sanctuary that winter evening, and the great pastor, taking note of them, put his arms around them as a mantle of warmth, and the three walked out together into the cold night air. At a public gathering honoring Beecher's memory forty years later, this incident was retold by a distinguished minister, who concluded by saying that he was one of those little boys.

During the middle of the week Mr. Beecher fell ill, stricken with apoplexy, and after lingering a few days, death came at 9:30 o'clock, Tuesday morning, March 8, 1887. The funeral was held on Friday,

with the Reverend Charles H. Hall of the Trinity Episcopal Church officiating, and with memorial services being conducted in many churches in Brooklyn and throughout the country. That Friday, described as a day of flowers and affections, was the brightest and sunniest day of the season. The populace came in great throngs to the old familiar church to pay their tribute to their great pastor and friend. The state legislature adjourned, all of the business houses of the city of Brooklyn closed, the flags were out on every street, the public buildings were draped in black velvet, and pictures of Mr. Beecher were displayed in hundreds of windows. Tributes from President Cleveland and famous people throughout the world honored the man who had been for forty years a great public leader. From Phillips Brooks came these words: "He was the greatest preacher in America, and the greatest preacher means the greatest power in the land. To make a great preacher two things are necessary, the love of truth and the love of souls, and surely no man had greater love of truth or love of souls than Henry Ward Beecher."

It would be difficult to overestimate Beecher's influence on his time and on subsequent generations. He was one of the two or three most significant Americans of the Nineteenth Century, and in some respects, his influence has been more widespread and enduring than has that of any other figure of the period. He played a vital part in the molding of the religious thought of his day, and in the social and political mind of his time. As an anti-slavery leader, his efforts were second to none. In the field of social reform, his influence has been much greater than is generally recognized. Suffrage, temperance, and economic justice found in Beecher their most eloquent and persuasive champion. No other figure of national importance spoke more frankly on the great social problems than did Beecher. He took a stand against such evils as predatory wealth and the abuse of civil liberties at a time when it took extraordinary courage and foresight to discuss such issues. Seeing the dangers of entrenched militarism, he lashed out against conscription which then prevailed in several European countries, and insisted upon the reduction of armaments in this country and everywhere. He felt and said that wars were the means whereby the rich and powerful could increase their profits and tighten their hold upon the masses. He expressly cautioned workingmen against being dominated by selfish military and financial interests. Sensing the increasing inadequacy of nationalism, Beecher advocated a world cooperation that places humanity above national sovereignty. In all

of these vital issues Beecher was usually far ahead of his time. He believed in social progress and felt that reaction spells death to life and culture.

5 Although Beecher did not formulate a systematic theology of the social aspects of the Gospel, still his sermons are quite definitive in expression and forerun Walter Rauschenbusch by more than three decades. His presentation from the pulpit of the social demands of Christianity set a prophetic precedent, and became a pattern for the subsequent generations of preachers. If ministers today can speak on social issues without too much fear, at least part of the credit is due to Henry Ward Beecher.

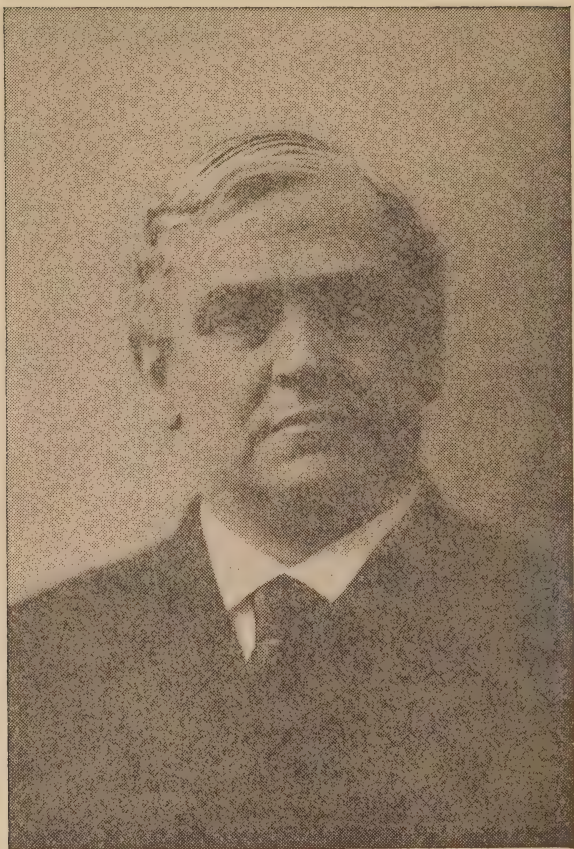
The religious liberalism of Beecher was not a radical departure from the orthodox tradition, but rather a moving ahead in the great main stream of evangelical Christianity. He did not believe in remaining tied to ironclad dogma, but he felt that men should be led forward by the living Spirit of Christ. He could accept scientific discoveries because he considered every new truth another disclosure of God's unfolding creation. His harmonizing of religion and science was profoundly important in the shaping of the theological viewpoint of the American clergy.

As a pulpit orator Beecher has never been surpassed. His place as America's greatest preacher is unchallenged, and in the annals of Western Christianity his name would stand along side a half dozen monumental princes of the pulpit. With him oratory as such was never an end but always a means. His one aim was to preach Christ and thereby bring men into a vital union with God. Above all, he was a spiritual preacher. His evangelicalism was not that of theological dogma nor conformity to established patterns of conversion, but was a warm, whole-hearted preaching of God's love for man and man's need for God.

Generous and gracious in spirit, compassionate and kindly in heart, wise and just in mind, Beecher had a remarkable understanding of the needs of his fellow men. He knew their hopes and disappointments, their virtues and frailties, and preached to their needs, holding ever before them the love of God in Christ. His life had one purpose and that was the preaching of the Gospel. That he possessed weaknesses and that he made mistakes cannot be denied, but he loved Christ, and he never deviated from his prime loyalty to Him. He had a widespread and good effect on the world of his time, and his influence continues a major factor in the ongoing stream of Christianity.

No words are more emblematic of the life of Henry Ward Beecher than these: "I have not concealed Thy loving kindness and Thy truth from the great congregation."

PHILLIPS BROOKS



PHILLIPS BROOKS

Phillips Brooks

A PARAGON AMONG men, Phillips Brooks epitomized the golden age of preaching. Physically, mentally, and spiritually, he was uniquely equipped to serve both as God's spokesman and the people's priest. He was in every way a gigantic man, not only in his huge frame of more than six feet four inches in height, but in the nobility of his character, the liberality of his mind, the depth of his spiritual life, and the majestic flow of inspired words that emanated from his heart and lips.

Into an environment rich in its cultural and religious heritage, Phillips Brooks was born. Mary Ann Phillips was married in 1833 to William Gray Brooks, and a little over two years later, December 13, 1835, their son Phillips was born. Both the Phillips' and the Brooks' were old and revered families of New England, with a long line of distinguished clergymen in each. Phillips Brooks was given his first name in recognition of his mother's family.

The Boston of 1835 was the Boston of a glorious era in the annals of America. William Ellery Channing was preaching the new liberalism, and William Lloyd Garrison was editing *The Liberator*. The eloquent Daniel Webster was the senior senator from Massachusetts, and Wendell Phillips, of the famed Phillips clan, was a rising young radical. Longfellow, Whittier, Emerson, Bancroft, and Holmes were among the new literary figures of the city.

Young Phillips had a happy home life, with stability, piety, and affection characterizing the closely-knit family. The father, like his

ancestors, was a public-spirited man, faithful in performing civic duties, and high-minded and dependable in his business relations. He was thoroughly devoted to his family, and was religious in a conventional sense, being more given to ethical precepts than to spiritual contemplation. Phillips' mother maintained the old Puritan faith; she was deeply spiritual, true to what she regarded as orthodox doctrines, and pious in her manner of living. Of a very affectionate nature, she poured all the riches of a mother's love upon her children. Throughout his life, Phillips Brooks carried in his mind the warm and beautiful memory of a happy home; in his later lonelier days, he kept, as a constant source of strength, the rich treasure of his parents' love.

As a boy Phillips enjoyed being at home; after school he seldom tarried to play with the other children, but would hurry back to his family. Although a physically healthy and strong lad, he preferred reading poetry to playing games. On Sundays he attended the Episcopal Church twice, and on Sabbath afternoons and occasional evenings he joined with his parents and brothers in the old-fashioned custom of singing hymns. When not quite sixteen years of age he entered Harvard College. Taking an interest in several of the college activities, he found the theatricals especially inviting; in his studies he did well, excelling in languages. He retained his interest in poetry and read widely in the English authors. During his college years, Phillips had reached six feet four inches in height; his rather angular and awkward appearance was eventually overcome as he filled out in weight and matured in manner. He already spoke, very naturally it seemed, with that extraordinary rapidity which was to distinguish his oratory in later years. He had not yet shown any outstanding forensic ability, however, and he disliked conventional elocution, feeling that it did violence to his natural personality.

In 1855, Phillips, being a few months past nineteen years old, was graduated from Harvard College. In September of the same year, he was employed as a teacher in the Boston Latin School; here he found the work very distasteful, the mischievous pupils being too unruly for him. In February, after only five months in his first position, Brooks was asked to quit and was considered a failure. The headmaster of the school, criticizing him for his inability to handle the task, told him that "he had never known anyone who failed as schoolmaster to succeed in any other calling." This failure caused Phillips untold grief and mortification. His classmates at Harvard had already found their places and seemed well-satisfied, but he had not; in his first trial

as an adult, he had been defeated and his feeling of humiliation was keen. He felt very much alone during these days of failure, and he wrote in his journal: "We may love God not only because He made us and guards us and supports us, but also because He knows us." With poignancy, he felt that only God can understand one's predicament, and that only the Lord Himself can feel the loneliness and anguish of an individual heart.

More and more Phillips put his thoughts into writing, and this helped to do for him what it has done for many, to clarify his views and to give direction to his life. As he walked the Boston streets during those melancholy winter and spring days, he began to undergo a gradual religious experience. He decided to enter the ministry. The call was not a spectacular one, nor was it very vivid; rather it represented a gradual clarifying of issues and a general movement in the direction of the ministry. He talked at length with the Episcopal rector, the Reverend A. H. Vinton, and then, telling no one else except his mother and father, he left for the Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia. As he departed, he wrote in his notebook: "As we pass from some experience to some experiment, from a tried to an untried scene of life, it is as when we turn to a new page in a book we have never read before, but whose author we know and love and trust to give us on every page words of counsel and purity and strengthening virtue."

On arriving in Alexandria, November 7, 1856, he was immediately struck by the dingy appearance of his garret lodgings; so small was his ugly attic room that within it he could not stand to his full height. For Brooks there was a dismal atmosphere of decadence in the South; the odorous cancer of slavery permeated the air. He disliked Virginia, for the whole social structure there was based on slavery; the beauty of the Potomac and the natural loveliness of the countryside lost their charm when he thought of the barter of human beings going on everywhere about him. He was homesick for the free, clear air of Boston. He hated the wicked complacency of a society that permitted a few people to live in a luxury built upon the sweat and sorrow of human slavery. To be an anti-slavery man in Virginia was to be exposed to persecution, and a few Northern students were threatened with being "tarred and feathered," but Brooks and the small minority of students who were defenders of freedom, stood together in the expression of their convictions.

The environment at Alexandria was anything but a comfortable

one. Only the prominent theological position of the seminary could keep Phillips Brooks in such a place. When he left the hostile atmosphere of the town streets and retired to his room, it was to a bed too short for him, with no armchair or any of the normal conveniences of life, but there, by the light of a tallow candle, he studied the Holy Bible and the great Fathers of the Church. He found particular value in Origen, Tertullian, Philo, Augustine, and Jerome, and in such literary figures as Samuel Johnson, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Bacon, Shelley, and Goethe. He was not so much interested in forming any theological system of his own as he was in finding out what the long line of major thinkers believed. This attitude revealed both his own humility and his own sound judgment, for in the study of the great figures he was able to appropriate as his own those truths which had helped the human race. Alexander V. G. Allen writes that Tertullian attracted Brooks "with a singular charm, as though he found in that vehement, passionate soul something akin to his own moods." He kept elaborate notebooks, with lengthy quotations from the Fathers and other writers, together with his own comments and observations, occasionally interspersed with lines of poetry.

Phillips spent the summer of 1857 with his family in Boston, and on July 12 he was confirmed at Dorchester; that he was as old as twenty-one years before taking this step was unusual and due to his reticence and feeling of spiritual inadequacy. The occasion was a great one for his mother, and in her papers after her death was found a note expressing her joy in his confirmation: "I will thank God forever that He has answered my lifelong prayers in making him a Christian and His servant in the ministry. Oh, how happy this makes me! May God continue to bless my dear boy and make him a burning and shining light in His service."

The letters from Phillips' mother are beautiful and moving in their simplicity and tenderness. Shortly before Christmas of 1857, she wrote: ". . . And although we shall not be with you this year, Philly, I want you to enjoy the day and think of us, and therefore I want you for my sake to go into Washington to church, and, oh, when you take communion, remember your mother. And after church I want you to go to Willard's or somewhere, and get a good Christmas dinner, with some of my present, and then when the children are enjoying their roast turkey, they can think that Philly has some too." Although Phillips usually was more restrained in his letters, at times he would give vent in his writing to his deep and abiding love for his

parents. During his years away from home, one can more and more see from his correspondence and his notebooks the influence of his parents as a steadying source of strength and affection.

In his spiritual development while at the seminary, Brooks grew in his conviction that the human soul is singularly precious in the sight of God. In his study of the great writers he was always looking for the beauty, the dignity, and the worth of the soul. Conscious of the sin that surrounds men, he clearly saw that the paramount need is the salvation of the souls of men. With Goethe's vision of "who'er aspires unweariedly is not beyond redeeming," he saw noble possibilities for man and was anxious to see these brought to fruition. Mindful of the doubts and conflicts of his time, with all of the issues of the century rising into his consciousness, he nevertheless envisaged a spiritual victory in which the value of man's soul and the purpose of God's universe would be made clear.

Phillips Brooks was of an affectionate nature. He possessed his mother's boundless capacity for love, although, at least in his earlier years, he was less obvious than she in his expression of it. The outlet for his affection was in his preaching. All of the deep, inner wells of human tenderness and love were channeled into his sermons. The natural love he felt within his heart was somehow sublimated and poured into his preaching. While at the seminary, it is clear that Brooks felt no particular call to a life of celibacy. Like most young men, he dreamed of some day being married; he had an ideal girl in his mind whom he described in his notebooks and to whom he wrote love songs. Why he never married remained a secret to the end. In later years he commented that he knew what it was to be in love, but his reticence never permitted the divulging of further facts.

Brooks was graduated from the seminary June 30, 1859, and the next day he was ordained an Episcopal priest. On July 10, at the age of 23 he began his ministry in the Church of the Advent at Philadelphia. There he remained for three years. He entered into the work with all his heart and soul, writing two sermons a week, delivering a Wednesday evening lecture, conducting a Saturday evening Bible class, and doing some visitation, too. He was enthusiastic and zealous, and from the first day of his ministry until the last, his life was centered on Christ and the preaching of the Word. Although young and of an exceptionally strong physique, he preached with such zeal that he often complained of being "terribly tired" after a Sunday's work. When Brooks, clad in a black Geneva robe, mounted the pulpit to

preach, he gave forth with power all that God had poured into him.

The eloquence and earnestness of the young preacher began to spread, and there came invitations from churches in Cincinnati and Providence and San Francisco. In 1862 Brooks became the pastor of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Philadelphia, and for seven years he ministered to this congregation, and in an increasing sense to the community and city. His preaching already possessed a distinguished radiance, a gleam which was to increase in brilliance with the passing of the years. In his preaching, as one youthful admirer wrote, there was "the light of the mystic, the light of the prophet, the light which never was on sea or land."

During the Civil War Brooks supported President Lincoln. His defense of the Negroes went beyond emancipation from slavery in the South; he wanted them considered and treated everywhere as children of God. He warned his congregation against bitter prejudice and smallness of mind, saying: "If the Negro is a man, and we have freed him in virtue of his manhood, what consistency or honor is it which still objects to his riding down the street in the same car with us if he is tired, or sitting in the same pew with us if he wants to worship God."

Brooks' father, a practical business man, became quite concerned about his son's radicalism, and in a letter from home advised him not to associate with extremist groups. He was admonished to listen to conservative men in regard to Negro suffrage, and was specifically warned against following such radicals as Beecher. "Don't go too far," was his father's remonstrance, to which Phillips replied in a letter: "You seem quite troubled about my radicalism. Don't let it disturb you. There is no danger. I certainly think the Negro ought to be free, and I am sure he is going to be. And I think he ought to vote, and I am sure he will in time; but neither of these things is the subject of my preaching, except on rare occasions. I trust I know my work too well for that. I preach what I was ordained to preach—the gospel, nothing else; but as a part of the gospel I accept the rebuking of sins, and public sins as well as private. . . . I know not how to work on any other system." With singular force he wrote: "We have got either to eradicate the Negroes or to integrate them. The first we can't do, the second we must."

In August 1865, Phillips Brooks left for a year's sojourn in Europe and the Near East. It was a year full of rich experiences, visiting the cathedrals and historic shrines, seeing the great cities and touring

the rustic countryside, and calling upon prominent literary and religious figures. In Germany he was especially interested in the old landmarks of Luther and Goethe, and was particularly inspired by the earnestness of the German preachers. While in London he met Robert Browning, and he described the great poet as being "cordial and hearty as a dear old uncle, shakes your hand as if he were really glad to see you." He remarked that nobody ever talked more nobly, truly, and cheerily than he. "I went home and slept after hearing him as one does after a fresh starlight walk with a good cool breeze on his face."

While in the Holy Land, Brooks went to Bethlehem for Christmas Eve, and as he looked out over the little village in which the Lord was born there stirred within his soul a song which he later put into writing. The whole world now loves to sing:

*"O, little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight."*

Brooks returned to Philadelphia with a nostalgic feeling for the old world in his heart. As he entered upon his parish work, he again took up the cause of the Negro, urging both suffrage and education as a universal policy. To many people such a policy might seem like radicalism, said he, "but Christianity is the radicalism of the world. The best way then is to teach pure unadulterated radicalism, for this is the only conservatism."

Brooks' Philadelphia ministry was ever-widening in compass and influence, and he was frequently invited to speak in churches of other denominations, both locally and afar. There came offers from two theological seminaries, the chair in church history of the one, and the presidency of the second; but these invitations, although appealing to his natural, academic interests, were declined. His calling was preaching, and deep within he must have felt that only the pulpit would offer ultimate satisfaction.

The greatness of Phillips Brooks was already being felt by the people who knew him and who heard him. A clue to this greatness

was his well-balanced outlook. There was nothing of the grim and dour about him; he was free from melancholy morbidity. He was never a glum saint, but he might be described as a jolly one. He had a good, unsophisticated sense of humor and in manner was mirthful and jocular. It has been said that he had a talent for "nonsense in little things." He enjoyed humming merry tunes, frolicking with little children, and cutting harmlessly humorous capers. He was a carrier of good cheer. When Brooks mounted the pulpit, all the mirthfulness disappeared, and he was all seriousness, as he gave forth with rapid, passionately earnest preaching. The great spiritual issues he presented in the pulpit, he would seldom discuss in private conversation. He did not preach sermons in the parlor. So far as his own personal religious experiences were concerned, he carefully guarded against mentioning them in private, reserving these spiritual subjects for his preaching. "There lay his power," comments Allen, "that he reserved himself for the pulpit, and refused to weaken himself by admitting any other mode of self-utterance."

In the fall of 1869, Mr. Brooks began his brilliant ministry at the Trinity Church in Boston. On Sunday morning, October 31, he preached his first sermon there from the text (Saint John 9:4-5): "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." For more than twenty years he was to preach from the Trinity Church pulpit, where he gave his whole heart and soul to the doing of his Lord's work. No man could pour more of himself into his preaching than Phillips Brooks. He worked with almost reckless abandon, and only such a robust physique and strong mind as his could endure such an outpouring of effort. He preached both Sunday morning and afternoon, delivered a Wednesday evening lecture, taught a Saturday night Bible Class, and conducted a communicants' meeting in preparation for the Lord's Supper. Soon he was considered pastor-at-large for the whole Boston area, preaching Sunday evenings in the suburban churches and in neighboring sanctuaries of various denominations. Civic activities were not neglected by him, either, and beginning in 1870 he taught a Bible Class at Harvard College.

During the early years of his pastorate, Mr. Brooks resided at the Hotel Kempton on Berkeley Street, where he began to accumulate rare and interesting items of furnishings and decoration which increasingly enriched the attractiveness of his lodgings, making them a place where friends delighted to gather. In later years he maintained a

home on Marlborough Street, taking with him his parents' servants. On Sundays he generally dined with his parents and brothers, John, Frederick, and Arthur. Another brother, George, had died during the Civil War. An impressive family experience was the occasion of Arthur's ordination in June 1870, when Frederick presented the candidate for his deaconate, and Phillips preached the sermon. Arthur went to Chicago to preach, and there he became engaged to marry. In a letter to him, Phillips wrote: "A life is a poor, imperfect sort of thing unless a man is married . . . I hope it won't be a long engagement. Do be married and be wholly happy very soon. Life isn't long enough to waste any of it." His friends were often asking Phillips about his marital expectations, but the answer would always be that the coming woman had not yet appeared. He had once commented that he knew what love was and had been in love himself.

Brooks usually breakfasted in his lodgings at seven-thirty o'clock, but dined out for his other meals, sometimes at hotels and often at public engagements and in the homes of friends. He spent the mornings in his study, reading and working on sermons, and he sometimes called in the afternoons. The evenings were spent in his study, or at public meetings, or with friends, and between eleven o'clock and midnight, he would retire. He attended occasional concerts in the Music Hall, and especially enjoyed oratorios. When he finished his work on a late Sunday evening he would often go to the home of his dear friend Dr. Vinton to relax. On the first Monday of each month he met with his ministerial friends, a group known as the "Clericus," and for many years these men held most of their informal sessions in Brooks rooms.

During the summer of 1870 Mr. Brooks again visited Europe. For the rest of his life it was his custom to go abroad every other summer, spending the alternate ones in the vicinity of Boston.

The great Boston Fire of November 4, 1872 destroyed the edifice of Trinity Church. The new building was planned under the direction of the architect, H. H. Richardson, a man of huge physical proportions who frequently accompanied Brooks on his European travels. With a delicate sense of inner beauty, Brooks himself made valuable contributions to the sanctuary's attractiveness.

The most serious problem facing Brooks and other earnest preachers of the period was the avalanche of people drifting away from the Christian Faith. The new science had shaken the belief of many; the Bible's validity was being questioned; the general viewpoint of life

as held by the masses was undergoing a radical change. The historic Christian interpretation of the universe was being challenged by earnest, serious-minded men. Brooks' mind was open to new truth. He believed in reason, and he believed in progress. He wanted to accept what was the truth from whatever quarter it came and at the same time maintain the eternal verities of the historic Faith. This was his problem, and he faced it with a brilliant and understanding mind, and a great and generous heart.

Brooks warned against a narrowness of view that is blind to progress, feeling that part of the theological dilemma had resulted from minds that were closed to new truth. He commented that such illiberality is often found in a new believer, but that it is quite unnatural in the mature Christian. Seeing the hand of the Divine in the unfolding of the universe, Brooks had no difficulty in accepting new spiritual truth. His religion was a living and growing one, and was not necessarily tied to preconceived standards. The essential truths of the Faith are spiritual, and their meaning cannot be everlastingly confined to the accepted dogma of any one historical period. The revelation of God in Christ, the Divine account of what is given in the Bible, must be experienced anew by each generation. The Bible must be read afresh, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, new insights will be found in each generation. Brooks saw the Christian religion as proclaiming certain great essential principles, eternally true; the very nature of these principles allows for progress in the affairs and knowledge of men. No man of any generation can exhaust the truth of God. The difficulty of many men of narrow vision is that they confuse first principles with trivialities. Brooks, remarkably free from such limitations, was able through his thought and preaching to awaken his generation to the problem at hand: the separation of the wheat from the chaff in the issues of religion.

A broad churchman, Mr. Brooks sought to make Episcopalianism liberal and free. He favored the principle of open communion, and upon several occasions of ecumenical significance he practiced the principle, being, of course, severely criticized by many within his denomination. He considered the Episcopal ordination descending from the Apostles valid only in a spiritual sense, and thought that the literal interpretation, to which many high churchmen hold, is both uncharitable and ludicrous.

Brooks would not compromise with what he felt to be basic religious principles. He did not believe in softening down the truth to

meet the demands of men. During an age of doubt, he preached faith in God. In the face of what Matthew Arnold called "the rising sea of doubt," Brooks was optimistic and hopeful. He believed, above all things, in the love of God revealed in Christ. When you are sure of God and His love, then nothing can completely confound you. In one of his sermons he said: "Not Christianity, but Christ! Not a doctrine, but a Person! Christianity only for Christ! The doctrine only for the Person!" At the center of his preaching was the accent on the Deity of Christ. The really important thing is "believe in Me," and not "believe this and that about Me." The second is secondary; of supreme importance is faith in Christ. The idea of Christ and the Person of Christ are so mingled as to be inseparable. Christ Himself is the Truth, and whoever receives Him becomes an heir of God.

In the fall of 1874, Phillips Brooks was stunned by the death of his brother Frederick, who was killed on a railroad track. Phillips afterwards gathered together a number of his brother's finest sermons and had them published in a memorial volume.

Sermons were always the most important activity in Phillips Brooks' life. Wherever he would go, his sermons would be in his mind. Preaching was what he lived for, and, as Allen said, "for that cause he might almost be said to have come into the world." His preparation for each sermon was careful and elaborate. In Boston he wrote one sermon a week, to which he devoted the major part of every morning. Before Monday came, he had his text in mind, and would begin to jot down notes and write brief passages. By the middle of the week he would organize the material and write it in outline form. On Thursday and Friday he wrote the sermon in its complete form, which would usually cover around thirty pages of his large, bold handwriting. The manuscript was twice the length that most ministers would require for a normal preaching period, because Brooks preached twice as fast as the average person. There was not a shorthand reporter in Boston who could take down his delivery of more than two hundred words a minute.

"Preaching," said Brooks, "is the bringing of truth through personality." His own personality was richly revealed in his sermons. Reserved in personal conversation, and seldom prone to discuss serious, heartfelt subjects, he saved his expression of the deepest, innermost feelings for his preaching. Everything in his life: his thought, his expression, and his action was geared to his sermons. Chosen to deliver the Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching at Yale University

for 1877-1878, he presented in a splendid literary style one of the most helpful discourses to be found on homiletics.

When Brooks' father died in January 1879, Phillips felt the first keen heart-stab of an impending loneliness. Just a year later, his mother died at the age of seventy-two, and on that melancholy occasion, he wrote to a friend: "Tonight the world seems very desolate and lonely." Brooks was strongly devoted to his parents. Of his mother he wrote that she had been the center of happiness in his life. Not long after her death, he preached at Trinity Church from the text: "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." In keeping with his manner, the sermon contained no personal reference, but it was his tribute to his mother, nevertheless.

When forty-five years old, Brooks was asked to become the University Preacher and Professor of Christian Ethics at Harvard. It was a very attractive offer to one who had always wanted to further pursue academic interests. It had been his boyhood dream to be a professor at Harvard. During his twenty years in the pulpit, no one realized the tremendous effort he had put into his preaching. People thought that his sermons just came forth; they did not know how he poured all of the mental and spiritual strength he had into them. The constant drain on his strength had begun to have its effect, and there were times when he was almost at the breaking point. He gave long consideration to the offer, while the issue was discussed by the people and press throughout the nation. He decided that his work was that of a parish preacher; so he declined the Harvard post and remained at Trinity Church.

The University established a body of chaplains, and on this staff Brooks accepted a place, so that his voice was heard on the Harvard campus from time to time. Colleges all over the country were always inviting him to speak, and his addresses before collegiate groups and his chapel sermons were both popular in their wide appeal and splendid in their intellectual and spiritual qualities. While abroad, Brooks often spoke in the schools and cathedrals of England, and he was invited to preach at old Windsor Castle for Queen Victoria.

Brooks' name was known everywhere, and everywhere he was honored and esteemed. He never ceased giving the best he had. Wherever he would go, he radiated confidence and good cheer. It used to be said in Boston that on a dull and rainy day, when things looked dark and lowering, Phillips Brooks would come down Newspaper Row and all was bright. His vitality seemed boundless, his capacity

to give strength and cheer to others was incomparable. Few persons knew that, when his house door closed behind him at 175 Marlborough Street late in the evening, the famous preacher and carrier of good tidings was tired and very lonely. One Christmas Eve he wrote, in a very touching letter to his youngest brother, recalling the happy days at home when their parents were with them: "Well, that's all over now, and here I am alone, with the Christmas festival safely over and the Christmas sermon done, and cheering myself up by looking at the mighty pretty little vase you have sent me, and by thinking how very kind you were to send it."

Late in 1882, Brooks left on an extensive trip to Europe and the Mediterranean. He visited Tennyson on the Isle of Wight, studied every spot in Germany connected with Luther's life, sailed down the Red Sea, and finally returned to Boston refreshed for the task ahead. Brooks believed that if a person is to give of himself for others that he must sometimes stop a while to renew his own strength.

The genial and generous Brooks was at times annoyed by the spread of false rumors and unjust criticism. Some people charged him with being theologically unorthodox, circulating, for instance, reports that he did not believe in miracles. He was even denounced for having paid tribute to the Christian character of a Unitarian minister. To his last day, there were always those who attacked him.

More and more Mr. Brooks felt that his main purpose as God's preacher was to help men to live. He became less concerned about homiletical style and eloquence, and increasingly passionate in pouring everything he had into his preaching. Every Sabbath the crowds overflowed the sanctuary into the vestibules and corridors as people came to hear the man who preached the Word of Life. There was something uniquely divine in the preaching of Phillips Brooks, something that attracted people and sent them away glad for having come to the Lord's house. One Spring day in 1888, Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote to Brooks: "I had the privilege of listening to your sermon last Sunday forenoon. I was greatly moved and impressed by it, and I came away very thankful that so divine a gift of thought and feeling had been bestowed upon one who was born and moves among us."

Faith did not come easy for Phillips Brooks. He had to fight for it, sometimes agonize for it, and win it inch by inch, blow by blow. Like the arms of a wrestler, waxing sinewy with practice, so did Brooks' faith become increasingly strong with each encounter. Such

faith as his was a steady source of sustenance and inspiration to the thousands who looked to him as their spiritual shepherd.

Mr. Brooks preached a hopeful, optimistic gospel. As clearly as any man of his time, he saw the evil and misery in the world, but with it all he was undaunted and firm in his confidence in the ultimate triumph of righteousness. He never evaded the sorrows, anxieties, and perplexities of life. He knew what it was to suffer humiliation and disappointment, of which, however, he seldom spoke to anyone. His loneliness was keen, and in his late years he wrote to Archdeacon Farrar: "Be thankful you are not a miserable celibate, whose being is bounded by the ground his two feet stand on." He faced man's predicament squarely, always aware of human suffering, and out of this confrontation he emerged with a triumphant faith. Life is sacred and beautiful and is full of meaning. God reigns and Christ is the Eternal Son. All men are the children of God, whose love is supremely revealed in Jesus Christ. Values are never lost, and there is real and abiding significance to human life when viewed in its relation to the exhaustless Christ. It is Christ who is the Alpha and Omega, says Brooks in his sermon on "The Eternal Humanity." Christ's life "bridges all eternity, and bearing our hope backward fixes it firmly in a security which has no beginning: bearing it forward crowns it with promises that have no end."

In June of 1889, Mr. Brooks left for a sojourn in Japan, which he found to be the brightest and prettiest land he had seen. Describing the people there as "the merriest, kindest, and most graceful," he especially commented on their warm hospitality and friendliness. They "seem as glad to see you as if they had been waiting for you all their years, and make you feel as if their houses were yours the moment you cross the threshold." Brooks was accompanied by his dear friend, the Reverend W. N. McVickar, and the two gentlemen, because of their unusual size, made a striking impression upon the Japanese. Brooks, who, besides his unusual height, carried almost three hundred pounds of weight handsomely distributed, and McVickar, who was of similar proportions, were likened by the little children to the image of the great Buddha. Some of the Japanese were curious to get the measurements of these remarkable men, wanting to know the size of their hands, and feet, and waists.

While abroad, Brooks wrote several Easter and Christmas hymns, including the well-known carol: "Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas tonight!"

Returning to Boston, he launched whole-heartedly into his preaching. It is said that Phillips Brooks lived to preach. Those who heard him report that there was an ever-increasing power in his preaching. In his earlier days he moved his congregation, but he seemed unmoved. In his later years, the whole man appeared affected when he preached. There was a mighty torrent of feeling within him which welled up into great preaching. During Lent in 1890, while Brooks was delivering a series of addresses, at New York's Trinity Church, the New York *Sun* commented: "He started without a preliminary utterance right into the heart of the sermon, and his very first sentence was uttered with that mighty impetuosity of thought and speech which distinguishes him among American clergymen, which makes it impossible for the swiftest stenographer completely to report him, and which is a Niagara of thoughts and words maintained from the beginning to the end of the discourse."

More than a half-century after hearing Brooks speak, Louis N. Whealton, a California lawyer and former mayor of Long Beach, gives this interesting account: "The most striking thing now in my memory is the rapidity with which he spoke—some two hundred thirteen words a minute. I recollect how difficult it was for me to keep up with him in thought and comprehension. It seemed that I had to jump from sentences to keep up, but the trend of his thought and the connection of his message was not broken. He was not an orator in the sense of striking use of modulation, emphasis, gesture or vehemence. His voice, deeply seated in his immense chest, was most pleasant; it was emitted on long, gradually-rising-to-climax sentences, with the emphasis at the end. The force from the rapid utterance, and the strength from reason and logic made a doubly impressive impact upon the mind. I often have thought of him on seeing a blow-torch in action, or a bellows light the coals into flame, for such was the effect of his phenomenal utterance on the listening mind."

Brooks was an extraordinarily handsome man. Mr. Justice Harlan of the United States Supreme Court, called him "the most beautiful man" he had ever seen. His large powerful body was well-proportioned, his posture was good, and his movements graceful. His very sharp dark eyes, writes Mr. Whealton, "seemed to be looking directly at you as he spoke." His clothes were always well-tailored. He wore pince-nez attached to a black ribbon, and in private association he had the interesting habit of dropping them from his eyes by a quick movement of his nose muscles.

Brooks' increasing loneliness did not prevent him from looking at life from the brighter side. Out of hours of thought in his study, there came the great sermons which gave consolation and inspiration to a multitude. The rectory's large study on Clarendon Street, where his work was done, was luxurious in its appointments: the walls lined with books halfway to the ceiling, with portraits and busts of Maurice and Kingsley, Coleridge and Stanley, and figures of antique beauty and charm adorning the room. Here was the ideal sanctum for a man who loved beauty.

Studious by nature, Brooks was not only in love with books but was in love with human beings. He was always hospitable, welcoming all who approached the study, saying "the man who wants to see me is the man I want to see." His bearing was both dignified and gracious; he was reserved and warm at the same time. He was very fond of children and enjoyed romping with them on the floor. When Helen Keller, the blind and deaf mute, was a little child, her father took her to Mr. Brooks to receive her first religious instruction. After the minister gave her some ideas about God, Helen remarked that she had always known that there was a God, but had not known His name. Brooks had a mysteriously helpful influence on people mentally distraught and spiritually downcast, and was especially effective in the sick room.

After almost twenty-two years at Trinity Church, Phillips Brooks was elected Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church on April 29, 1891. This ecclesiastical elevation brought acclaim from all over the world. Thousands of people outside his own parish who had considered him as "our pastor" now thought of him as "our bishop." James Russell Lowell, the poet, wrote to him: "Though I do not belong to the flock which will be guided by your crook, I cannot help writing a line to say how proud I am of *our* bishop."

There were criticisms of Brooks, too; generally on the grounds that his views were overly liberal. Some said he was too friendly toward non-Episcopalian ministers, even Unitarians; and others brought up the old cries about his advocacy of open communion and his liberal interpretation of apostolic succession. Brooks was not an organizational type of man; he disliked church machinery and thought that the administrative aspects were over-stressed to the great damage of the spiritual ministry.

After his consecration, Bishop Brooks immediately plunged into his many Episcopal duties. He visited countless churches and

preached and lectured almost everywhere he went. Humane and religious causes enjoyed his support, and he was affiliated with a number of organizations devoted to social betterment and good will. He was, for instance, a member of "The Society of Friends of Russian Freedom." The multiplicity of routine duties, together with the energy expended in the pulpit and on the platform, began to overtax his strength. When he visited England in the summer of 1892, he seemed to realize that this was his last trip abroad. There was a note of farewell in his remarks concerning the old landmarks he had loved to visit through the years.

Although not feeling well, Brooks officiated at Worship on Sunday, January 15, and preached in the evening, going to church in an open sleigh. A cold developed, but the Bishop continued to meet his speaking engagements, and on Wednesday night spoke at the Woodland Park Hotel. It was his last public address. By the next morning his throat was very sore, and on the subsequent days he grew weaker. On Monday evening, January 23, 1893, at the age of fifty-seven, the last great preacher of the golden age died. Boston and America and the whole Christian world felt the strange and melancholy absence. The man who more than any one of his time personified Christian character and spirituality was suddenly gone.

When the funeral was held Thursday, it was hard for many to believe that the great Phillips Brooks was dead. People everywhere, still stunned, began to realize that they had lived in the presence of one truly aflame with the Divine Light, and that now he was gone. In Trinity Church the people sang "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" and "For All The Saints." Almost twenty thousand persons were gathered outside the Church and as the body was carried by Harvard students out the doors to Copley Square, the great throng sang "O God, Our Help in Ages Past." It was hail and farewell to the great preacher. There was no exaggeration in Dr. George A. Gordon's comment upon the passing of Brooks:

*"Never to the mansions where the mighty rest,
Since their foundations, came a nobler guest."*

Phillips Brooks was a preacher of power, and his power did not end with his death. During his life, with an energy and magnificence seldom equaled in the history of the church, he preached the Word of God, breaking down the vain walls of partisanship and intolerance and littleness of mind, and giving to men new light and brighter

hopes and visions of a larger good. He put to flight the fears and doubts that trouble men's souls and pointed the way to the faith and assurance found in Jesus Christ. He undergirded men with his broad interest, his deep sympathy, his generous understanding, giving strength to the weak, succor to the broken-hearted, and something to live for to those who despaired. He helped to put zest and meaning into life, so that men could live more radiantly and abundantly. He helped to restore light to the minds of men and to kindle human hearts with love. To countless thousands he opened up the treasures of new life here, and everlasting life in the world to come. Men and women came to know God better because Phillips Brooks had lived. Clergymen and laymen alike, inspired by the life and preaching of this man of faith, influenced by his largeness of mind and warmth of heart and greatness of spirit, were soon to take up the work where he left off.

On a few occasions in history, there is found a rare individual into whom God has poured an unusual measure of spirituality. In more modern times Phillips Brooks is pre-eminent as the exemplar of those Christian qualities best summarized by the term spirituality. Through the example of his living and through the preaching which grew out of the depths of his religious life, he brought men to a new and vital experience of God.

WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH



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Walter Rauschenbusch

ALTHOUGH THE NAME of Walter Rauschenbusch is becoming increasingly familiar to the present age, the fame of this preacher of power is still in no way commensurate with his true greatness and his universal influence. Appearing at a critical period of history, when both the old social order and the established religious *mores* were being challenged, Rauschenbusch met the crisis in an heroic manner, and through the keenness of his mind, the trenchancy of his writing, and the unique content of his preaching, he probably did more to mold Christian social thought in the Twentieth Century than any other man.

There had been a long line of clergymen in the Rauschenbusch family when Walter was born in Rochester, New York, October 4, 1861. His father, August Rauschenbusch, who had come to America from Germany in 1854, was a Baptist minister who taught many years at the Rochester Theological Seminary. There were three children in the family, and when Walter was almost five years old, his mother took the children to Germany, where they remained for four years. German teaching and customs had a strong influence on the growing boy. The father spent the last few months with the family in Germany, bringing them back to the United States in 1870.

Upon returning to Rochester, Walter became more and more conscious of the strained and difficult relationships at home. His parents were not happily married, and the family life was not congenial. The home was further darkened by the father's intemperance, which

caused young Walter to resolve to make a life-long fight against the evils of liquor.

Walter was justly proud of his mother, who was a woman of character and ability, and from whom he inherited his fondness for nature and beautiful things. From early childhood he enjoyed long walks along the leafy lanes of the countryside and would spend hours watching the myriad activities of the animal world. He always preferred the freedom of the outdoors to the confining games of the parlor.

An alert, healthy boy, Walter did well at school, except at such times when his excess energy led him into mischief. He developed ideas of his own and was not always willing to conform to the routine ways of his environment. While in Sunday School he expressed such radical views that he shocked his teacher and his father, the latter threatening to have him expelled.

During the eighteen-seventies, Walter spent several summers working on farms in Pennsylvania and New York. One year he was paid only twenty-five cents a day, given very little to eat, and forced to work such long hours and at such a strenuous gait that he was completely exhausted each nightfall. Years later he declared that this bitter experience marked the beginning of his vigorous opposition to long hours of oppressive labor.

In 1878-1879 Walter attended the Free Academy in Rochester, and for the next four years he was in Europe where he traveled and studied. He did exceptionally well in his studies and mastered several languages.

Walter loved art and literature, and while still in his 'teens was revealing an ability to write beautiful prose. For a while he thought of becoming a novelist. More and more, however, his thoughts turned toward religion, and by March, 1882, he responded to the call of the ministry. At this time his sister Emma was ready to leave as a missionary for India, and before her departure the two enjoyed a tour through central Europe.

Young Rauschenbusch studied a year at the celebrated University of Berlin. It was a great and rewarding year, and the culture and beauty of old Europe captivated the young American student. In his letters home he expressed enthusiastic praise for the scenery of the Alps, the loveliness of the countryside, the magnificence of the cathedrals, and the inspiring charm of the historic shrines. He thrilled to the great music he heard in the opera houses and concert halls and

was enraptured by the masterpieces in oils and stone of Raphael and Michelangelo. The brilliant professors at Berlin challenged the youth's thinking and opened for him new and fascinating avenues of intellectual interest.

Returning to Rochester in 1884, Walter continued his theological studies at the Seminary. During the summers he had a supply pastorate in Louisville, a German Baptist church. At this time he was more inclined to be a pastor than a theologian, and he was much more anxious to be a preacher of Christ than a writer on metaphysics.

Young Mr. Rauschenbusch cut a fine figure, standing about six feet tall, well-proportioned, and weighing around one hundred and eighty pounds. He had a handsome pair of burnsidcs and a mustache; in later years he wore a full beard. His countenance reflected gentleness and understanding, and his lovely hazel eyes sparkled with a youthful cheer and a kindly humor.

Theologically and socially, Walter Rauschenbusch was moving in a radical direction. The Spirit of Jesus became his guiding light, and he was resolved to live by the teachings of the great Galilean. He felt that many people talked about Christ, but did very little about practicing His teachings. Upon finishing his seminary work, Walter was inspired to go as a Baptist missionary to India, but an Old Testament professor objected to the young man's liberal views and the appointment was prevented. The Baptists should have a safe and conservative man who would "save" souls and would not delve into the social principles of Jesus and the prophets. Such was the thought of the men who kept Rauschenbusch from going to India. The passion of the young man was not of the type to be easily quenched. He was determined to preach the Gospel, be it in America or abroad, and he was zealously set upon proclaiming anew the long-neglected teachings of Jesus.

On June 1, 1886, Rauschenbusch was called to the pastorate of the Second German Baptist Church in New York City, a small congregation of one hundred and twenty-five members, housed in an unattractive building in the lower west side tenement district. The promised salary was nine hundred dollars, and this meager amount would have to depend upon a better cooperation among the divided congregation. It was in this little church on the border of notorious Hell's Kitchen that young Mr. Rauschenbusch began his work to win men to Christ and to lead people into a nobler and more brotherly life.

It was not long before Rauschenbusch realized that the old-fashioned concept of saving souls does not fulfill the demands of Christ.

Working among a downtrodden class, as he visited the crowded, dingy homes of his people, he saw little children who were underfed, families unable to buy the necessities of life, young men turning to crime in order to obtain food. He saw honest, earnest men unable to find work, others who labored long and hard hours for wages still insufficient to provide decent security for the children at home. He saw families disgracefully housed, poorly fed, trying to eke out an honest existence, hounded by bill collectors, pressed for clothes enough to keep them warm in winter and clean in summer. He saw the heads of these families, Christian mothers and fathers, weighted down with worry and hardship until they were broken in mind and body and died worn-out long before completing a normal life span. Only a few blocks away from the tenements of these hard-pressed people were the lavishly expensive mansions of the rich, who, luxuriating on their divans and making the rounds of extravagant parties, presented a cruelly vivid contrast to the people of Rauschenbusch's parish. Such extremes of poverty and wealth within the same precincts and among people who bore the name Christian seemed horribly sinful to Walter Rauschenbusch. He became convinced that there was something drastically wrong with the capitalist system. A lifetime of poverty for thousands of families and the regular recurrence of economic depressions do not speak well for capitalism. As he later wrote in *Christianity and The Social Crisis*: "... industrial crises are not inevitable in nature; they are merely inevitable in capitalism."

It is not the lazy and the immoral who suffer under capitalism; it is the hard-working and honest people who constitute the great mass of those who feel the pangs of poverty. Rauschenbusch felt that his task was not only to help make an individual soul more Christ-centered, but to make the social order more Christ-centered. He did not hesitate to enter the arena of political activity. He heartily endorsed the single tax, which constituted an outright attack upon the great landed aristocracy. He supported the radical Henry George for mayor of New York; he labored for better housing for the poor and more playgrounds for the children.

The Church of Jesus must seek to improve the conditions of the under-privileged and must bring the full impact of its weight to correct the evils of social injustice. To save an individual soul for the hereafter is part of the Christian Gospel, but it is only a part of it, and it does not deal with the problem of making life here and now wholesome and happy. Rauschenbusch had enough good sense to know

that life cannot be very satisfying without food to eat and clothes to wear and a pleasant house in which to live. "Pie in the sky by and by" does not answer the hunger needs of the present moment.

Rauschenbusch saw the answer to human needs in the concept of the [Kingdom of God.] There must be personal religion, so that the individual's life is spiritually orientated. There also must be social religion, so that the social order will be designed along Christian lines. The two must go together. Both are part of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is within. The Kingdom of God is in the social order. The Kingdom is here and now as well as hereafter. The Kingdom is on earth as well as in heaven. Justice is a vital part of the Kingdom of God, justice for the working men, justice for the poor, justice for little children born in abject circumstances. Rauschenbusch's idea of the Kingdom is one that touches all areas of life. It is God's will being done on earth as it is in heaven.

The defenders of the *status quo* warned Rauschenbusch not to meddle in social and political issues. He was told the same old thing that the prophets of Israel had been told. He was admonished to stick to saving souls and not to become involved in the issues of the social order. Rauschenbusch was not an extremist; nor was he quick to jump at conclusions. He was a solid, scholarly, devoted Christian clergyman; so again he turned to the Bible for further study and guidance to make sure that he would do only what God had wanted him to do. He read again what Amos and Isaiah and Micah preached, and what Jesus taught; and he was more fully convinced than ever that he must obey the Bible. To obey the Bible meant to preach social justice. Rauschenbusch really believed what Jesus taught. There was no doubt in his mind that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Rauschenbusch read widely in a variety of writers: Jefferson and Bunyan, Bellamy and Tolstoi, Tennyson and Fichte, Lord Shaftesbury and Beecher. His mind was open to new truths, and his every thought was to do God's will. He felt that travel played an important role in the development of the mind. By 1891, he found himself on a third trip to Europe where he visited industrial cities and studied social conditions in England and Germany. He gave further study to the New Testament and conversed with the most brilliant theologians in Europe concerning Biblical criticism and the social interpretation of the Gospel.

Rauschenbusch's hearing had been poor since 1888, when a re-

lapse from the grippe resulted in partial deafness. Although sensitive about this handicap, he faced it with fortitude and never permitted it to interfere with his sweet disposition.

Rauschenbusch had always enjoyed the company of young women, and whether in Europe or America, he called upon a number of attractive girls. While lecturing in Milwaukee, he renewed his friendship with Miss Pauline Rother, a young school teacher whom he had previously met at a German Baptist convention. They fell in love and were married in Milwaukee, April 12, 1893. Taking his bride back to New York City, Rauschenbusch and his wife were warmly received by the people of his parish. Mrs. Rauschenbusch soon became well loved in the church and community. An attractive and graceful young woman, with brown hair and blue eyes, she was blessed with strong health and an energetic nature. Her mind was keen, and she shared her husband's religious and social viewpoints. Wisely turning much of the housekeeping over to a maid, she was able to help her husband in his pastoral duties. She became adept at communicating conversations to him, and this proved of great assistance in coping with the problem of his deafness.

There were five children; two daughters, Winifred and Elizabeth; and three sons, Stephen, Paul, and Carl. The life at home was congenial and joyous and in later years the family especially enjoyed their sojourns at a summer home on Sturgeon Lake in Canada.

During the eighteen-nineties, Rauschenbusch worked hard and kept occupied long hours with his writing, editing, lecturing, and preaching, as well as attending to the regular pastoral duties. In a monthly paper which he edited, there is sounded the urgent call to work for the Kingdom. He wrote in one of the issues: "Most Christians say: Wait till all men are converted, then a perfect social order will be possible. Most social reformers say: Wait till we have a perfect social order, then all men will be good. We say: Go at both simultaneously; neither is possible without the other. They all say: Wait! We say: Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!"

Rauschenbusch was giving vivid expression to his radical Christian views, and his words were not falling upon a deaf audience. Many were listening to him as he spoke out against predatory wealth and economic evils. He considered stock market transactions and unearned increment from idle land as evils, because there are no services or goods given in return for such profits. He favored the public ownership of railroads and the socialization of such natural resources

as mines, forests, gas, oil, and waterways. As he spoke upon these subjects, he warned against the power of the newspapers, which he said were subsidized and controlled by the monopolistic financial interests. The people would have to do some thinking for themselves, as they could not rely upon the views and news given by a press subservient to the financial interests that control the economic order.

It was the deepest conviction of Walter Rauschenbusch that social reform must go hand in hand with personal regeneration. One without the other is inadequate. Only the impact of the two together can reach all those areas of life which need redemption. "Unsocial Christians" are no more helpful than "unChristian socialists" in bringing about the needed transformation. A Christianity which is both personal and social in its orientation offers the answer to man's deepest needs.

It was Rauschenbusch's feeling that the Kingdom of God is larger than any one idea of it. He conceived the Kingdom as standing "for the sum of all divine and righteous forces in the earth. It embraces all pure aspirations God-ward, and all true hopes for the perfection of life." He speaks of the Kingdom as a synthesis combining several conceptions, and as being "more powerful than the sum of all its parts."

Rauschenbusch was called to a chair in the German department of Rochester Theological Seminary in 1897, and served as Professor of New Testament interpretation, natural sciences, and civil government. Although qualified to teach in any one of these areas, the combination of such varied subjects was an unusual one. He was no doubt happier about his teaching schedule after 1902, when he left the German department to become the Professor of Church History in the Seminary. Always thoroughly prepared, he became an increasingly attractive classroom lecturer, being gracious in manner and eloquent in speech. His humor was mild and refined, his understanding of student problems reasonable and sympathetic. Never ambiguous nor affected in his manner, he spoke a language that was clearly understood, factual and earthy in content, and always presented with dignity.

Both in his teaching and his writing, Rauschenbusch insisted upon truthfulness. He never hesitated to give the facts, no matter how ugly, but he gave them with poise and kindliness. His work did not please the conservatives, for he left no doubt in anyone's mind as to his unequivocal opposition to the prevailing capitalism.

The monumental year in Rauschenbusch's life was 1907. His great master work, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, was published, and the book made him world famous. More than any other book of the modern period, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* became the fundamental manifesto of the social Gospel. In this book theological formulations were given to the great social ideals of the Kingdom of God. Here was an Amos of the Twentieth Century who, pointing to the ideals of the Christian Gospel, defined the standards for the social order, with the authoritative affirmation: "thus saith the Lord." Here was a man saying that God demands social righteousness, and like the great prophets of Israel, he pointed to the specific needs of men and women. No important area of human activity was left out of his presentation. Fearlessly he faced the issues of the social order, applying the teachings of Jesus and the Hebrew prophets to the contemporary scene. He was speaking, not as a sociologist, nor as a political reformer, nor as an economic idealist; he was speaking as a preacher of God.

Rauschenbusch's reputation as the exponent of the social Gospel was firmly established, and he found himself at the center of the new movement of Christian liberalism. He was in great demand as a preacher and lecturer, and wherever people were interested in solving the titanic problems of the social order, there was an anxious turning to Rauschenbusch for illumination. Labor unions and student groups as well as churches, wanted him to speak, and invitations came from universities and colleges, from socialists and pacifists, from a vast variety of individuals and groups who were feeling the splendid urge to help bring in the day of brotherhood. An enthusiastic orator, Rauschenbusch put his whole heart into his prophetic preaching, working unstintedly even at the expense of undermining his health. He traveled great distances to speak both to large gatherings and to small groups in little churches from which he did not accept fees. Everywhere he preached the Gospel with emphasis upon its social aspects.

The years following 1907 were prolific in speaking and writing. Among the writings of Walter Rauschenbusch during this period were seven books: *For God and the People*, *Prayers of the Social Awakening*, *Christianizing the Social Order*, *Unto Me, Dare We Be Christian?*, *Social Principles of Jesus*, and *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, the latter appearing in 1917. Few books of the Twentieth Century have had a more profound impact on the thinking and feel-

ing of the clergy as his *Prayers of the Social Awakening*. A new and much-needed note is struck, and a fuller expression of man's common concerns is given in these beautiful prayers. In them is freshly felt man's responsibility to his fellow men, his duty to the underprivileged, his need to improve the social, political, and economic order, and his being called to the high task of serving the Kingdom of God. His social passion is beautifully exemplified in this prayer for the Kingdom:

"O Christ, Thou hast bidden us pray for the coming of Thy Father's Kingdom, in which His righteous will shall be done on earth. We have treasured Thy words, but we have forgotten their meaning, and Thy great hope has grown dim in Thy Church. We bless Thee for the inspired souls of all ages who saw afar the shining city of God, and by faith left the profit of the present to follow their vision. We rejoice that today the hope of these lonely hearts is becoming the clear faith of millions. Help us, O Lord, in the courage of faith to seize what has now come so near, that the glad day of God may dawn at last. As we have mastered Nature that we might gain wealth, help us now to master the social relations of mankind that we may gain justice and a world of brothers. For what shall it profit our nation if it gain numbers and riches, and lose the sense of the living God and the joy of human brotherhood?"

Make us determined to live by truth and not by lies, to found our common life on the eternal foundations of righteousness and love, and no longer to prop the tottering house of wrong by legalized cruelty and force. Help us to make the welfare of all the supreme law of our land, that so our commonwealth may be built strong and secure on the love of all its citizens. Cast down the throne of Mammon who ever grinds the life of men, and set up Thy throne, O Christ, for Thou didst die that men might live. Show Thy erring children at last the way from the City of Destruction to the City of Love, and fulfill the longings of the prophets of humanity. Our Master, once more we make Thy faith our prayer: 'Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done on earth!' Amen."

Walter Rauschenbusch has become one of the most quoted men of modern times. His lectures and sermons, his books and articles, his poems and prayers, lend themselves well to quotation. He is adept in

making himself clearly understood. His short sentences are pithy, his similes vivid and picturesque. He makes a quick, pointed phrase tell a whole story. His books are so beautifully written that at times they reach the level of poetic prose.

Rauschenbusch felt that no area of human life is exempt from the claims of the Kingdom of God. The industrial order had too long escaped the influence of the Gospel. The economic tycoons represent the last entrenchment of an unredeemed feudalism. That capitalism has been efficient in the production of wealth is readily admitted, but Rauschenbusch objected to the resulting inequality that kept the wealth in the hands of an autocratic few without regard to the human needs of the many. Whenever private gain is put on a higher level than the social good of all, there is a denial of the basic teachings of the New Testament. For Rauschenbusch the Kingdom of God involves an ideal community of men where all the areas of life are brought under the guiding control of the Spirit of God revealed in Jesus.

The most serious moral issues are not private ones, but are those public problems related to the social order. Without under-estimating the value of personal virtue, Rauschenbusch knew that some of the most pious men in their private lives were among the most flagrant violators of social morality. He reminded a generation that had combined Victorian prudery with economic reaction that the publicans and sinners will enter the Kingdom before the Pharisees and scribes. The dignity of the poorest man is more sacred than all the property of the rich. The Christian's prime duty is to the Kingdom of God, and this means putting social justice and brotherhood into practice.

Rauschenbusch's radicalism was that of the Hebrew-Christian tradition. He never considered himself a member of a political party. He believed that public ownership and control should be gradually extended to cover the major means of production and public utilities. He favored the extension of public education, libraries, cultural centers and recreational facilities. He advocated the public ownership of natural monopolies and the breaking up of huge estates. Rauschenbusch was an individualist in favoring the private ownership of homes, small businesses, and small farms. In such a well-distributed type of private ownership he saw the guarantee of a truer, freer democracy than could be achieved under either monopolistic capitalism or autocratic communism.

Rauschenbusch was vigorously opposed to the revolutionary tactics of Marxist communism. Both the autocracy and the materialism

of Marxism were repugnant to him. The liberal, non-violent, democratic process was the only method in which he had any confidence. Any advance toward a fairer and more equitable social order must come through an open and free cooperative movement. In his life-long campaign for social justice, Rauschenbusch was never a dogmatist, but always a liberal in the truest sense. His was the practical philosophy that naturally grows out of a whole-hearted loyalty to the ideal of the Kingdom of God as revealed in Jesus.

President Theodore Roosevelt was greatly impressed by Rauschenbusch's views. In one interview, the President told the professor that he would try to put into practice as many aspects of practical socialism as would be advisable for the country's welfare. Prime Minister David Lloyd George of England, after asking Rauschenbusch's advice on legislation for labor reform, proceeded to put it into practice with marked success. The influence of Rauschenbusch's views was felt by leaders of social thought and action all over the world. In no realm, however, has his influence been as great as on the leaders of the Christian Church. The social Gospel, fathered by Rauschenbusch, became the most important factor of Twentieth Century Christianity and has been carried on by such men as Francis John McConnell, Harry F. Ward, and John Haynes Holmes.

The last years of Mr. Rauschenbusch's life were saddened by the First World War. He had given much thought to the problem of war in modern society, and he felt that unjust social and economic conditions were at its roots. He had said that "rarely, if ever, is any war fought in which private interests are not the real force demanding the war." Although long and consistently opposed to militarism and conscription, Rauschenbusch did not become a pacifist until later years. As Europe broke into fiery conflict, Rauschenbusch saw the world full of hate, and he wrote: "I cannot expect to be happy again in my lifetime." He advocated American neutrality and firmly opposed the sale and delivery of munitions to England. Becoming a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Christian pacifist organization, he continued to work for peace. During the war, he wore on his coat lapel a piece of crepe, an outward symbol of his mourning. He was convinced that the way of Jesus is the non-violent way of love and of overcoming evil with good.

Because of his German ancestry and his Christian pacifism, Mr. Rauschenbusch suffered much from the cruel barbs of patrioteers during the war. He was unjustly called "pro-German" by those too

ignorant to understand his Christian convictions. The bitter persecution by mean and narrow men wore heavily upon the sensitive and compassionate heart of the good preacher. These cold stabs were as devastating as the menacing cancer in his failing body but, with it all, he retained a sweet and kindly spirit. He kept at work, writing and lecturing and preaching, and was constantly aware of the ever-growing need to make known the redeeming Gospel of Christ.

One day, early in 1918, Herbert Francis Evans, distinguished religious educator, stopped in Rochester to see Professor Rauschenbusch. Years later, he gave this interesting account of his interview: "I had a never-to-be-forgotten half hour with the man whom I admired. He was obviously ill, but he spoke with burning intensity to the admiring young disciple. As I arose to leave, Dr. Rauschenbusch thanked me for coming and said 'You and such as you will carry on that which I must leave to other hands. I know you will do in your day what I could not do in mine.' I went forth feeling that somehow I had a special responsibility to carry on. Three months later Dr. Rauschenbusch's voice was silent, but his message was carried on by the new generation."

While the shadows of war and sickness and persecution darkened his last days, his great faith remained undaunted. Not long before his death, Rauschenbusch wrote:

*"In the castle of my soul
Is a little postern gate,
Whereat, when I enter,
I am in the presence of God.
In a moment, in the turning of a thought,
I am where God is."*

There was always a strong mystical element in Walter Rauschenbusch. It was his inner fire which kindled his social passion.

Stricken with cancer, torn by grief, weary and exhausted from thirty years of labor for the Kingdom of God, Walter Rauschenbusch died July 25, 1918, in his fifty-seventh year. The darkness of his last days never dimmed his brightest hope: he knew in his heart that someday the Kingdom of God would come on earth as it is in heaven.

Of Rauschenbusch's personal characteristics, none was more outstanding than his compassion. Like his Lord, he saw the people in their need, and his heart went out to them. He was a warm, understanding man, deeply sympathetic by nature and always acutely sensi-

tive to human suffering. He was able to feel the sorrow and troubles of his fellow men and could enter vicariously into their pains and toils. He seemed to know the poor man's anguish, the worker's problem, the widow's loneliness. His natural compassion, enhanced and directed by his devotion to Christ, made it imperative for him to labor for the alleviation of suffering.

Rauschenbusch, with all of his life-long outpouring of effort in behalf of the under-privileged, was something of an aristocrat in manner. He was gentle and gracious and refined. He was always sociable and friendly, but in his social demeanor he seldom deviated from an innate dignity. His disposition was sweet and kindly, and he had more confidence in the power of love than he did in force and impetuosity. He spent a third of a century in the battle against social injustice, but his brave and unwavering prophecy was never marred by hate and personal animosity.

Although Rauschenbusch has been called a saintly man, he never assumed the airs of the sanctimonious. His personal life was exemplary in the highest degree, but there was nothing of self-righteousness in it. He never hesitated to associate with the publicans, and he was too deeply aware of the tragic aspects of life to be a quick judge of the personal morals of other individuals.

Without underestimating the importance of individual religion, it was Rauschenbusch's appointed task to bear witness to the much neglected social aspects of the Gospel. In so doing he was a mighty factor in changing the direction of Protestantism. He recaptured the significant message of the prophets of Israel, and gave fresh interpretation to their teachings. He called for a practical application of the New Testament way of life to our modern social and economic order. He helped to make the social creed an integral part of the Protestant faith. He influenced the churches to take an official stand for social righteousness, alleviation of poverty, improvement of working conditions, arbitration of industrial disputes, abolition of child labor, abatement of monopolies, minimum wages, and old age security. His influence was strongly felt in the formation of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, as well as among the denominations, the social service organizations, and the theological seminaries. The whole Church was profoundly moved and changed by Walter Rauschenbusch. He helped her recapture her original mission in the world by giving fresh theological formulation to long-neglected Christian social principles.

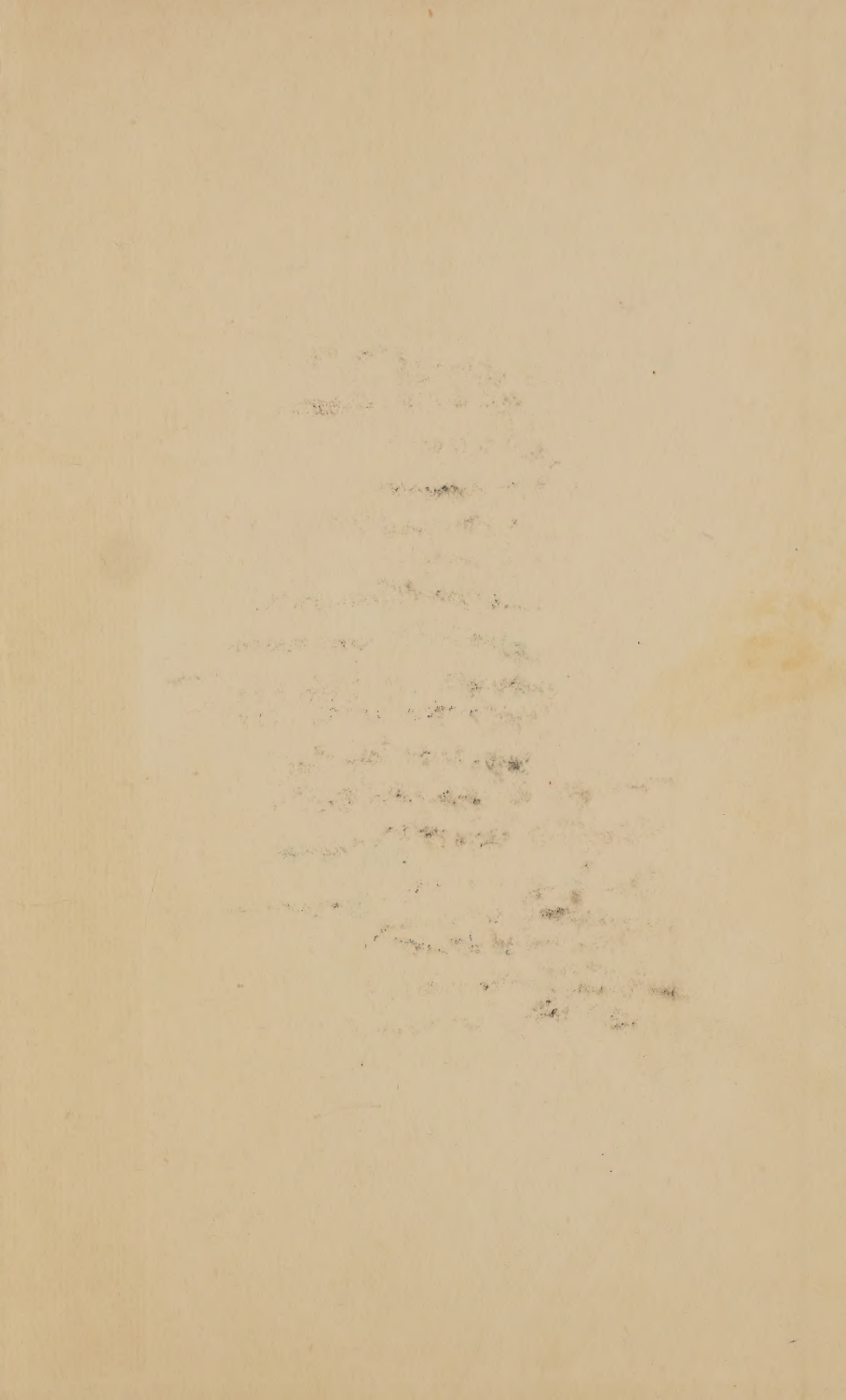
Rauschenbusch was distinguished as a theologian, historian, teacher, naturalist, writer, sociologist, and prophet of social justice, but it should not be forgotten that he was always and primarily an evangelical preacher. His interest in history and theology was subordinate to his passion for souls. His study of sociology and his work as a social reformer had their roots in his preaching of the Gospel.

Evangelical in the truest sense, he detested sham and cheap histrionics, and concentrated on a clear, intelligent, honest presentation of Christ's claims. At the heart of his preaching was the fervent desire to bring men to a more abundant life. He believed the Kingdom of God must prevail in every realm of human life. He particularly put his finger upon that segment of life wherein there is greatest need for improvement: the economic and social order.

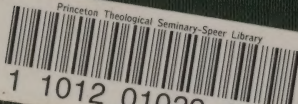
More than any other man of the modern period, Walter Rauschenbusch gave dynamic meaning to the social demands of the Gospel. He knew that individual salvation and social redemption must go hand in hand in the work of the Kingdom of God. He was the prophet of the New Jerusalem. His vision was that of a world of peace and justice and brotherhood. With whole-hearted devotion to Christ, and with a compassionate concern for his fellow men, he gave unstintingly of his life and labor toward the realization of that vision.

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